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Daily Report
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FBIS-NES-95-197 *12 October 1995*

CONTENTS

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

Syria's Qaddurah Reiterates Peace Position *[Damascus Radio]* 1

Islamic Affairs

Columnist: Brotherhood Troubles Uniting Extremists *[AL-WAFD 4 Oct]* 1
Writer: Complacency Leads to Demise of Islam *[AL-RAYAH 19 Aug]* 2
Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 3 Oct 5

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat on Elections Schedule, Participants *[Jericho VOP]* 10
'Arafat, Officials on Prisoners, Other Issues *[Jericho VOP]* 10
'Arafat Urges Donors To Increase Financial Aid *[Jericho VOP]* 10
'Arafat Attack on Iran 'Music to Ears of U.S.' *[AL-SAFIR 2 Oct]* 11
Hamas To Negotiate 'National Unity' With 'Arafat *[AFP]* 11
Hamas Statement: 'No Agreement' at Khartoum *[London AL-HAYAH 11 Oct]* 11
Hamas Issues Statement; Fatah Officers Seek Entry *[Jerusalem Radio]* 12
Hamas: U.S. Responsible for Abu-Marzuq's Life *[London AL-HAYAH 12 Oct]* 12
Hamas Official Talks of 'Trust' After Release *[London AL-HAYAH 10 Oct]* 12
IDF Forces Withdraw From 3 West Bank Towns *[Jericho VOP]* 13
Sha'th Interviewed on Israeli Troop Deployment *[Cairo International]* 13
'Urayqat Urges Israel To Stop Violating Taba *[Jericho VOP]* 14
Japan To Build West Bank-Gaza 'Raised Highway' *[MENA]* 14
Oman, Kazakhstan Recognize Palestinian Passport *[Jericho VOP]* 15

Arab-Israeli Talks

Israel Offers New Proposal on Female Prisoners *[Jerusalem Radio]* 15

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Nahnah Urges Impartial Elections, Coalition *[Algiers Radio]* 16
Rally for Culture Leader on Election Campaign *[Algiers Radio]* 17
Party Leader Says Candidacy Prevented by Regime *[London AL-HAYAH 11 Oct]* 20
Elections Commission Receives 97 Complaints *[Algiers Radio]* 21
Candidates To Feature in Radio Phone-In Programs *[Algiers Radio]* 21
Security Forces Arrest Former Minister's Killers *[Algiers TV]* 21
Agreements Signed on Rescheduling Foreign Debts *[Algiers Radio]* 22

Egypt

U.S. Tightens Security After Shaykh Conviction *[AL-AHALI 4 Oct]* 22
U.S. Embassy Revamps Surveillance *[ROSE AL-YUSUF 9 Oct]* 22

Defense Minister To Leave for U.S., Warns Sudan *[MENA]* 22
Musa Says No Date Set for Meeting With al-Qadhdhafi *[MENA]* 23
Al-Qadhdhafi's Visit, Deportees Crisis Discussed *[MENA]* 23
Muslim Brotherhood Deputy Guide Gives Interview *[London FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH Oct]* 24
Shaykh Comments on POW Killings by Israelis *[MENA]* 26

Libya

Citizens Said Ready To Help Palestinian Brothers *[JANA]* 26

Sudan

Akol Views Impact of Splits Within SPLM *[London AL-HAYAH 8 Oct]* 27

Tunisia

Effects of Drought on Foreign Trade Viewed *[REALITES 31 Aug]* 29

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Kuwait

Prime Minister Holds News Conference *[Kuwait TV]* 30

IRAQ

UN Report on Weapons Paints 'Alarming Picture' *[London PRESS ASSOCIATION]* 39
Ekeus Said 'Lying' on UN Report *[AFP]* 39
Spokesman: U.S. Remarks on Referendum 'Impudent' *[INA]* 40
SAIRI Calls Saddam's Referendum 'Desperate Move' *[IRNA]* 40
Baghdad TV Reports Pupils' Support for President 40
Tariq 'Aziz Receives Yemeni Adviser *[INA]* 41
Republican Guard Officers Said Killed in Attack *[Voice of Rebellious Iraq]* 41
Government Artillery Pounds Kurdish Area *[Voice of the People]* 41
KDP Spokesman on Turkish Incursion, PKK Claims *[Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan]* 41
U.S. 'Continued Violation' Protested to UN *[INA]* 42

ISRAEL

Rabin Under Guard Following Right-Wing Attacks *[Jerusalem TV]* 43
Civil Administration Turns 3 Offices Over to PA *[Jerusalem Radio]* 43
Peace Now Reports Building Drive in West Bank *[Jerusalem Radio]* 44
Ben-Eli'ezer Calls Report 'False' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 44
New Development Projects Approved on Golan Heights *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 12 Oct]* 45

JORDAN

Al-Kabariti on Ties With Syria, Iraq, Gulf *[AL-SAFIR 5 Oct]* 46
Comments on Ties With Egypt, Israel *[MENA]* 46

LEBANON

Buwayz on Presidential Term, Peace Talks, Iraq *[MENA]* 48
Clashes, 'Aggression' Reported in South *[Beirut Radio]* 49

SYRIA

Radio on al-Asad's AL-AHRAM Interview *[Damascus Radio]* 50

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

UN Envoy Mestiri To Continue Peace Mission *[IRNA]* 62

Peace Proposals Presented to President Rabbani *[Kabul Radio]* 62
Envoy in Iran Warns Taleban Against Kabul Attack *[Tehran International]* 62
Taleban Attacks Near Kabul; Government Responds 63
Captures Positions Near Chahar Asiab *[Tehran International]* 63
Rabbani Troops Ready To Counterattack *[AFP]* 63
Kabul Deploys Missile Against Taleban *[IRNA]* 64
Taleban Advances Into Kabul 'Suburbs' *[AFP]* 64
Defense Ministry Statement Issued on Kabul Attack *[Kabul Radio]* 64
Radio Reports on 'Defeated' Taleban Attack *[Kabul Radio]* 65
Dostam Forces Launch Offensive North of Kabul *[AFP]* 65

Bangladesh

Iranian President Continues Official Visit 66
Radio Reports on Official Talks *[Tehran Radio]* 66
Offers Assistance in Oil, Gas Projects *[Dhaka Radio]* 66
Discusses Economic Cooperation *[Dhaka Radio]* 67
Praises Persian Language Faculty *[IRNA]* 67
Cautions on Trade With 'Outside World' *[IRNA]* 68
Urges Muslim 'Unity' Against Enemies *[IRNA]* 68

India

Daily Views 'Bhutto Tactic' in Dealing With U.S. *[THE TIMES OF INDIA 10 Oct]* 68
Daily Says U.S. Arms Data 'Obfuscate' Reality *[THE TIMES OF INDIA 10 Oct]* 69
Agreement on Expanding Trade With Russia Reported *[Delhi Radio]* 70
UN Envoy Assails Pakistan for Fueling 'Terrorism' *[Delhi Radio]* 70
Daily Criticizes Rao 'Inaction' on Hostages Issue *[INDIAN EXPRESS 11 Oct]* 70
Daily Calls UK Party's Stand on Kashmir 'Hogwash' *[THE HINDUSTAN TIMES 9 Oct]* 71
Ministry Rejects OIC Statement on Jammu, Kashmir *[Delhi Radio]* 71
Maharashtra Government Move on Enron Welcomed *[Delhi Radio]* 72

Iran

Daily Views U.S. Plan for Iraq's 'Dismemberment' *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 30 Sep]* 72
Tehran Condemns U.S. Military Presence in Gulf *[IRNA]* 73
Official on 'Sinister' Western Intervention Plan *[IRNA]* 74
Commentary Views Dialogue Between Kurdish Groups *[Tehran Radio]* 74
Interior Minister Views Relations With Turkey *[Tehran Radio]* 75
Commentary Views Turkey's Cross-Border Operation *[Tehran Radio]* 75
Commentary Examines President's Bangladesh Visit *[Tehran Radio]* 76
Vice President, Pakistani Oil Minister Meet *[IRNA]* 76
Majles Official Condemns U.S. Presence in Gulf *[Tehran Radio]* 76
Article Comments on Foreign Exchange, Exports *[RESALAT 13 Jul]* 77
Article Says Imports Threaten Domestic Production *[RESALAT 6 Aug]* 79
Daily Views Foreign Exchange, Car Industry *[RESALAT 6 Aug]* 79
Daily Provides Gold Coin Prices in Tehran Market *[RESALAT 6 Aug]* 80
Daily Reports on Coupon Correcting Centers *[RESALAT 6 Aug]* 80
Daily Announces Rice Coupons, Sales Outlets *[RESALAT 6 Aug]* 81

Nepal

Lohani Voices Confidence in Improved China Ties *[THE RISING NEPAL 29 Sep]* 81
Lohani on Relations With India, Bhutan *[THE KATHMANDU POST 9 Oct]* 81
Government Papers Freed To Compete; Radio, TV Controls Stay *[THE KATHMANDU POST 10 Oct]* 83

Daily Welcomes Government Move To Free Press *[THE KATHMANDU POST 11 Oct]* 83

Pakistan

Communique Issued After Leghari Azerbaijan Visit *[Islamabad Radio]* 84
Islamabad Said Endeavoring for Regional Peace *[Islamabad Radio]* 84
Technology Cooperation Talks Held With PRC *[Islamabad Radio]* 85
Report on State Bank's Annual Economic Report *[THE NEWS 9 Oct]* 85
Minister Says Economy Grew 4.7% in '94-'95 *[Islamabad Radio]* 86
Spokesman Refutes Reports on State of Economy *[Islamabad Radio]* 86
General Strike Said To Paralyze Karachi Areas *[AFP]* 87
Radio Reports on 'Partial Strike' *[Islamabad International]* 87

Inter-Arab Affairs

Syria's Qaddurah Reiterates Peace Position

JN1110073095 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The 94th conference of the Interparliamentary Union continued its meetings in Bucharest. A [Syrian] People's Assembly's delegation headed by speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah is attending the meetings. The conference began discussing an article on the political, economic, and social situation.

Qaddurah delivered a speech in which he stressed that the current international situation is not a viable basis for international relations because it not based on the principles approved by the international community and the UN Charter—a charter that sometimes supports the party that violates it or that ignores the resolutions of the establishment that is based on it. The UN resolutions were adopted to be implemented in full. Implementation of these resolutions should not be selective, with some kept in drawers in accordance with the desires and interests of some countries and parties.

Qaddurah said Israel tries to circumvent and distort Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 through separate solutions and agreements that aggravate the situation in the Middle East and obstruct the march of comprehensive, just, and balanced [mutawazin] peace.

Qaddurah stressed that Syria, under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad, wanted and still wants, and worked and will continue to work for just and comprehensive peace that restores the land and rights to us based on our awareness that peace that caters to the interests of one party at the expense of another cannot last and will be a burden on the party that accepts the swallowing of its rights and the party that devours the rights.

He said Syria accepted the U.S. peace initiative, which was launched in the spring of 1991 and which was based on Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 and the land-for-peace principle. Although a long time has passed since the Madrid conference and several rounds of negotiations in Washington, Israel did not change its positions of wanting both land and peace, ignoring international public opinion and the fact that peace cannot be established at the expense of our land and rights.

Qaddurah added that Syria emphasizes that it is continuing its work for a just and comprehensive peace that should lead to Israel's withdrawal to 4 June 1967 lines and from all Lebanese lands in accordance with Resolution 425.

Islamic Affairs

Columnist: Brotherhood Troubles Uniting Extremists

NC1110134995 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 4 Oct 95 p 7

[Report by Sa'id 'Ukashah]

[FBIS Translated Text] At a time when the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt is passing through a suffocating crisis because of the vicious confrontation with the ruling regime—a crisis that peaked when the government referred the Brotherhood detainees to the military courts—various reports speak of strong protests by Brotherhood youth against senior members. The youngsters are calling on the group to adopt a stern position on the onslaughts initiated by the government and the security service against the group's symbols and activities.

The Islamic Jihad Group led by Ayman al-Zawahri from exile in Switzerland has addressed an appeal to all the Islamic movements to unify ranks and chart a strategy for confronting the onslaught launched against the advocates of Islam. The changes within the group are obviously understood to be taking place due to the acts of violence to which the ruling authority is subjecting the group. Although this could lead to the disintegration of the group and the emergence of a violent trend, the Egyptian Government seems to be indifferent to the link between current events within the Brotherhood and events within the violent groups in Egypt since the seventies.

Al-Zawahri exploited the disappearance of the Islamic Group's spokesman, Tal'at al-Qasi, to address his appeal for the unity of all the Islamic movements in confronting the campaigns against political Islam activists inside and outside Egypt. He is also focusing on all the opposition trends within the various Islamic movements.

The disintegration of the Brotherhood could swell the number of activists within the violent groups that call for change by force. We admit that Ayman al-Zawahri is not the person to lead a movement to unify the ranks of the groups of Islamic violence within the framework of a unified organization. We also admit that Islamic Jihad does not have enough force to attract other movements. But can Islamic violence make a charismatic person adopt al-Zawahri's call and try to achieve it on the ground.

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Writer: Complacency Leads to Demise of Islam

95AE0059B Doha AL-RAYAH in Arabic 19 Aug 95 p 13

[Article by Dr. Mustafa Mahmud: "Using Islam in Order To Destroy Islam"]

[FBIS Translated Text] After spending only a few days in Europe, a tourist from the Middle East discovers that there is a vast difference between the Middle East and the West. In Europe he finds cleanliness, order, advanced technology, a high level and high quality of life for the citizens there, insurance for workers, women, sick persons, handicapped and elderly persons who are infirm, and protection of the environment from smoke coming out of factories and automobile exhaust pipes and from those who would litter the streets or cut down trees. Even the trees there have people who protect and defend them, and whoever engages in an assault upon the life of a tree is punished. Europe also has another tree that is even older and more venerable—the tree of freedom, democracy, and human rights that has taken root in soil drenched in the blood of wars and revolutions; and it is still growing and stumbling.

We do not find this either in our countries or in the other nations of the fortunate East, which are proud that their people profess Islam—which was the religion of cleanliness, justice, mercy, sympathy for the unfortunate, freedom, and human rights before the phrase "human rights" ever appeared in the West.

It is certain that we have not correctly understood our Islam. Furthermore, we have utilized our Islam to destroy its very goals and teachings, and we have used the words of the Koran to snuff out the light of the Koran.

Our first and greatest error was the manner in which we understood the phrase "Islam is for God, and Islam is the face of God," and the way we understood fate, what has been written in store for us, and what God has written in his tablet in Heaven.

Our understanding of all of this has been totally negative: As long as God has written, decided, and sealed our fate, why should we labor and work hard? In this manner we have turned Islam into odious negativism, laziness, and despicable indifference.

This manner of understanding Islam means both deceiving oneself and deceiving God. Nobody knows what God has written and decided concerning our fate, and nobody knows what is in store for him and, therefore, cannot justify his laziness.

Also, God's order was clear concerning His urging human beings to fight for the faith and work hard, and His decision with regard to the extent of this diligence and hard work is indicated in the following Koranic verse (69 of Chapter 19, the Spider): "And those who strive in Our (Cause), We will certainly guide them to Our Paths."

Here God has made His decision to provide guidance dependent on how hard a human being strives and has made a human being's work the necessary precondition for granting him success for rendering a favorable decision concerning his fate. Hundreds of Koranic verses concerning the virtues of work have been revealed. No verse concerning faith has not been coupled with the idea of good works. In the pages of our Holy Book, there are many examples concerning people who believe and who perform good works. There is no excuse for anyone resorting to this deception.

God did not order us to be indifferent, but rather to have trust in Him and put forth every possible effort before letting go, capitulating, and asking for God to grant us success.

When the Prophet Muhammad was asked about fate and when the Muslims said to him: "Why should we work if God has already written our fate for us?," the Prophet said decisively: "Yes, we must work. Everyone is entitled to what has been created for him."

This means that human beings should work as hard as they can, and God will provide for everyone in accordance with how hard he has worked and what he deserves. Everyone shall receive from God what he deserves.

The second sin was the statement made by our forefathers: "There can be no individual interpretation of the text of the Koran." This is a clear order to have people not use their minds and to dispense with their use when confronted with the texts—and how many of them there are.

The result of this directive has been the cessation of pursuing the path of independent judgments concerning the texts of the Koran for many centuries and the transformation of the Koranic verses into petrified inscriptions that one may not tamper with or whose meanings one may not dwell upon. The Prophet, however, set for us an example that is different from this. One of the Koranic verses concerns cutting off hands, and this has become a letter of the law concerning which there are no exceptions. But we saw that the Prophet did not cut off people's hands during wartime, and this is an exception that is not mentioned by the Koranic texts. The Caliph 'Umar also followed this example and did not cut off people's hands when there was famine, and this is also an exception that is not mentioned in the Koranic verses.

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This decision was one that relied on a sound mind that says that one cannot blame a hungry person when he steals food. And it was also a sound decision not to cut off the hand of a Muslim thief during wartime since this would lead to an evil even greater than theft—which is that this Muslim would flee to the ranks of the enemy and he would then turn into a bitter enemy of Islam after having been in the ranks of Islam.

In both of these cases, the interpretation is an intelligent one and represents the clear practice of making it a legal and obligatory duty to think about these matters and making it totally un-Islamic to refuse to use one's mind. And what was right for 'Umar is right for every thinking Muslim who pursues the path of independent judgments.

There is only one case in Islam in which one must not use one's ability to reason—when discussing the nature and essence of God. The Hadith [Prophetic tradition or quotation of something said by the Prophet Muhammad] concerning this matter is clear, and the meaning of it is: "Think about God's miracles and works, but do not think about His nature, otherwise you will perish."

This is the only exception and the only commandment not to use one's reason. The German philosopher Immanuel Kant, in his book "Criticism of Pure Reason," supported it when he said: "It is impossible to perceive God's true nature by means of using reason, because the human mind is not made for attaining this type of comprehension. It is made only to be aware of what is perceived by the senses and to then deduce laws from that. It is not made to be able to perceive the true nature of anything." In his second book, called "Criticism of Practical Reason," he said: "We perceive the existence of God by means of our insight, not by means of reason. We conclude, on the basis of our feeling of thirst, that we need water and that its existence is necessary. Likewise, on the basis of our desire for justice (since it does not exist in this world), we conclude that the existence of a just god in the afterworld is something that is necessary. This is a perception of the existence of God rather than a perception of his true nature."

This is something that is in full agreement with the Hadith, which existed a thousand years before Kant and his philosophy and which advised that people not enter into thinking about, or using the powers of reason concerning, the nature of God.

This is the only area that is off limits when it comes to using one's mind. Other than that, the mind is made for thinking, contemplation, and exercising independent judgment concerning the Koran and concerning contemplation of its laws and all other matters in the world.

But Muslims have preferred to be lazy and close their minds to everything, and they have anointed their laziness with the oil of Islam, but Islam is not to blame for their laziness.

Their laziness has targeted not only the Koran and its verses, but has also affected the environment and efforts to safeguard it, the universe and efforts to understand its laws, all the sciences, politics, society, the lives of women, life in general, and the whole world, which lazy people have dragged down to the lower depths.

With the exception of a limited renaissance during the early days of Islam, when there appeared great pioneers in all fields of knowledge such as Ibn-Sina in medicine, Ibn-Rushd in philosophy, Ibn-al-Haytham in mathematics, Jabir ibn-Hayyan in chemistry, al-Razi in surgery, Dawud al-Antaki in pharmacology, Ibn-Khaldun in the philosophy of history, Ibn-Batutah in travels, and others, the curtains of ignorance and backwardness have once again descended upon the world's Muslims, and this has opened the door to tyrannical and rapacious imperialism, which has encroached upon the lands of the Muslims, treaded upon their holy places, and eliminated what remained of the positive legacy in their history.

Today we are attempting to rise again and catch the train of progress. Some people with a secular orientation think that Islam is an obstacle. Others who have a traditionalist orientation [al-salafiyin] insist that no ideas should ever change, that one should not use one's powers of reason, and that the mind should be shackled. The fact is that this group of Muslims are the ones who constitute the obstacle—not Islam itself. Islam gave free rein to the powers of thought and unleashed the human mind. In fact, it has considered the human mind and freedom to be the trust that has been entrusted for safekeeping to every Muslim. This is the trust that all humans have accepted since the first sign was given to mankind by the Lord of the Worlds.

"We did indeed offer the trust to the Heavens and the Earth and the Mountains; but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof: but Man undertook it; he was indeed unjust and foolish." (Verse 72 of Chapter 33, the Confederates)

Man took the trust, the trust of his mind and his freedom, and accepted it on the condition that he act in accordance with it and safeguard it. Those who have betrayed the trust most of all have been the Muslims of our time. They have not acted in accordance with it, nor have they safeguarded it. There is no freedom in most of the Islamic countries, nor is there any democracy there. There one finds rule by tyrants and domination by individuals, parties, and whims. One finds no science, innovation, invention, encouragement

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to think, or reasoning minds. There is no enlightened thought, even in their faith, which they have supposedly been protecting; and there is no safeguarding it from the rebellion and explosion of intellectual minds. And their wealth has been a calamity for their Islam and their process of civilization.

With the exception of short eras and a few regimes, darkness and backwardness have descended upon the nation of Islam. They flatter themselves when they call themselves a single nation. In fact, they are nothing but a bunch of groups and gangs of people who have no connection with each other, and the hostility between them is greater than the friendship between them.

This has clearly been true in the case of Bosnia. These nations did not move to help their Muslim brothers in Bosnia, except through speeches, declarations, and donations. They are still "marching in place," as if what is happening to Islam and the Muslims were happening on Mars rather than at their doorstep.

The Muslim world is not backward because it lacks potential. In spite of the Muslims' backwardness, they are still the richest nation on earth in terms of their potential, energy resources, and services, etc., both above and below the earth's surface. The Muslim world is still rich in terms of its population and unique minds.

The tragedy is that the minds of the Muslims are shackled, their thought is paralyzed, and the Islamic community [al-jama'ah al-islamiyah] is petrified and is merely standing in place. Those among the Muslims who are ignorant say: "This is the fate that is in store for us."

We say to them: This is the fate of lazy people because of their laziness, and this is the fate of negative people because of their negative nature. Islam has nothing to do with it. They are the ones who have shackled their Islam, put out the lamps of Islam's enlightenment, and destroyed Islam's beacons.

Read your Koran again, but with liberated minds and open hearts. Take a look at the sayings and doings [sunnah] of the Prophet, his behavior, his morals, his thought, and his Hadiths. Do not be content with descriptions of his outer garments and his beard. This is only touching the oyster shell rather than taking the pearl out of the oyster. Take the pearl out of the oyster, take the jewels out of their treasure chests, and take the light out of the cellar where it has been stashed away. You have been standing around long enough, like stones, adhering to this superficial external Islam that deals with the crust rather than the inner core. Change what is within your souls, so that God may change what is within you, and start acting, so that your lot will be one that satisfies you. Love each other so that fate will lead you to victory. Rise up from your grave-like slumber. You have been asleep long enough, and you have nearly lost both this world and the afterworld. Some people will become angry when they hear this criticism and will reply: Why don't you go to the Gulf area, and there you will see palaces ['imarat] like jewels, palaces run by remote control devices, satellite stations, advanced technology, and petroleum industries that are just as advanced as those in Europe. To this, I say: All of this represents imported civilization and technology, which has been bought and transferred. It is a civilization that is marching behind Europe rather than in front of Europe. Those who have transferred this civilization to us have received their reward and their wages, and what they did was an act for which we are thankful. But I am not talking about technological civilization [madaniyah]. I am talking about real civilization [hadarah]. Real civilization is not palaces that are run by remote control devices, nor buildings like brides that dazzle the eyes. Real civilization means thought, art, innovation, inventions, and religious and scientific enlightenment, which change the course of history. These are things that cannot be bought or imported. It means local nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, which illuminate the surrounding land and change people's minds and beliefs and make their living conditions better and sounder. Real civilization is what brings us the likes of Newton, Einstein, Max Planck, and Beethoven, and it is what gives birth to the likes of Gandhi, Voltaire, al-Mutanabbi, al-Biruni, and Ibn-al-Haytham. This civilization was once created by Islam, and Islam can create it again.

Real civilization is the fruit of peoples' minds and sentiments when they become alive. It is not the result of wealth, and it cannot be bought in installments from here and there.

Real civilization means a climate of freedom and free and creative thought, which provides incentives, encourages, and brings out the best in groups of human beings.

Technological civilization is a matter that is easily available. There are everywhere people who possess it in abundance, they buy it and transfer it, and we are grateful to them for this. But real civilization arises from within a nation, is born within it, and it cannot be bought by means of a land's wealth. This is what I am talking about, and this is what I am concerned about.

The transfer of knowledge and technology is a good beginning, and it is a praiseworthy step. The West began by borrowing knowledge from Muslim scientists

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and scholars. Plato and Aristotle came to Egypt and studied at Awn University in 'Ayn Shams, and they borrowed the ancient Pharaonic civilization's sciences and monotheism before they had an independent philosophical school and an intellectual beacon that radiated knowledge to the world from ancient Athens. Civilizations engage in cross-fertilization, they intermarry, and they give birth to other civilizations; and sometimes they fight and do battle with each other and then become sterile. I fear that that is what is happening to us in this day and age.

History means forward movement.

All I am asking for is that we have our share of this forward movement, due to our fertile religion and what we possess in terms of authenticity and ancient traditions that have drunk from the well of the wisdom of the prophets and from the friendship of divine inspiration.

Merely asking for this will not provide us with a voice. This will have to be done by means of a struggle and hard work, which is carried out by the members of our Islamic world community, who, by means of their struggle, will establish the foundation upon which we can build the civilization that we are asking for. And then the beacon that has been extinguished for so long will shine once again.

Rise up, throw off your shackles, and unshackle our religion.

Ask "his excellency" to stay awake nights and to work by the sweat of his brow instead of sitting in front of the television set, reading his horoscope in the newspapers, and weeping about his fate. May God have mercy upon us and upon you all.

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 3 Oct

NC1110112695

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 3 October edition of the Arabic language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. U.S. Takes Security Measures After Shaykh's Conviction
2. Al-Azhar Scholars, Israelis Squabble at Nuclear Conference
3. World Human Rights Groups Protest Muslim Brothers Trials
4. Editor Slams Mubarak Remarks to LE FIGARO, NEW YORK TIMES
5. Writer Attributes Extremism, Terrorism To Corruption
6. Detained Brothers Urge Mubarak To Reconsider Military Trials
7. British Lawyers Criticize MB Trial by Military Court
8. MB Leader Slams Mubarak's Critical Remarks
9. Cairo University Students Call for Halt to Military Trials
10. Islamic Chambers of Commerce Call for Establishing Blocs
11. Writer Views American Jewish Campaign Against Muslims
12. Writer Says Israelis Killed Soldiers, Civilians in Sinai
13. Seizure of Islamic Books at Airports Criticized
14. Writers Urges Opposition To Establish Radio, Television

U.S. TAKES SECURITY MEASURES AFTER SHAYKH'S CONVICTION

A 70-word unattributed report on page 1 notes that the United States has taken extraordinary measures and declared a maximum alert to protect its interests worldwide from revenge attacks after a U.S. court convicted Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman. The report says that Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman is facing a life sentence. It notes that the U.S. jury found Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman guilty of instigating the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York and of an attempt to assassinate President Mubarak.

Al-AZHAR SCHOLARS, ISRAELIS SQUABBLE AT NUCLEAR CONFERENCE

In a 450-word report on pages 1 and 8, Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah says that members of al-Azhar University, who were in an unofficial Egyptian delegation participating in a seminar in Cairo held by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on 26-28 September squabbled with members of the official Israeli delegation. The Zionist members were angry at the Egyptian experts, particularly those of al-Azhar University, for demanding the abolition of Israel's nuclear weapons. Speaking at the seminar, Dr. Abu-Laylah said that if the Israelis want "to build confidence and establish a genuine peace, they must destroy their nuclear arms." He said: We cannot sleep because of these weapons, which are "a horrible nightmare." He said the Israelis discuss only marginal issues and ignore substantive ones. Members of the Israeli delegation accused Abu-Laylah of acting on behalf of the Egyptian Government, which he denied. When an Israeli said that Israel will keep its nuclear power, Abu-Laylah responded that we Muslims do not fear death. Abu- Laylah presented a paper in

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English, entitled "Security and Peace from an Islamic Perspective," which links security with faith.

WORLD HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS PROTEST MUSLIM BROTHERS TRIALS

A 500-word report by Qutb al-'Arabi on pages 1 and 8 says that as the Administrative Judiciary Court hears the defense panel's petition that trying the Muslim Brothers in a military court is illegal, local and international reactions are on the rise. He notes that several U.S. human rights organizations have sent messages to the Egyptian president protesting the trying of civilians by military courts and calling for their trial by ordinary courts, particularly as there is no evidence and the defendants represent the elite of the Egyptian society. Naming several such organizations, the report says that some of the messages stress that the defendants are "known to believe in dialogue and plurality and to use peaceful methods." The report says that a delegation of British lawyers, who are visiting Egypt for this purpose, are continuing their meetings with Egyptian officials. They expressed their concern over the detention of civilians for long periods of time and their referral to military courts. They also criticized the Egyptian civil courts for agreeing to refer these defendants to the military courts. The report also notes that the British lawyers met with Muslim Brotherhood leaders, notably spokesman Ma'mun al- Hudaybi.

EDITOR SLAMS MUBARAK REMARKS TO LE FIGARO, NEW YORK TIMES

Chief Editor Majdi Husayn writes a 2,000-word article on page 2 on President Mubarak's latest interviews with the NEW YORK TIMES and LE FIGARO. He says that by nature Egyptians do not oppose their rulers and hope that their rulers will correct their own shortcomings. He maintains that Egyptians oppose a ruler only when forced to. Husayn claims that President Mubarak seems not to care about the people's feelings. In this regard he say notes that President Mubarak told the NEW YORK TIMES that he believes that Israeli Prime Minister Rabin is doing all he can, but that he is restricted by the Likud opposition. Husayn notes that this was deliberately cut out in the versions published in the Egyptian papers, and he says this is "dishonest" and deprives the Egyptian people the views and feelings of the president who has been ruling them for 14 years.

Husayn points out that Rabin and other Labor Party leaders constantly consult with the Likud, whereas President Mubarak does not consult at all on domestic or foreign issues with the opposition, be it Islamic or secular, leftist or rightist. Mubarak believes that this is "a sign of power," he says. President Mubarak "does not even consult with the ruling party's political bureau, which never meets." It is strange, Husayn says, that President Mubarak should have all this respect and appreciation for Israeli democracy, take into account Rabin's feelings, and understand the Likud's pressure on Rabin while not mentioning that nothing of the sort exists in Egypt. Husayn wonders if President Mubarak realizes that he "negated democracy" in Egypt with his remark to the most famous newspaper in the world, for Mubarak thus emphasized that "the Jews are worthy of democracy while the Egyptians deserve the whip."

Husayn notes that in his interview with LE FIGARO, President Mubarak said that throughout the ages Egypt has had strong central government and that the Egyptians support their governments no matter what. Husayn questions "the reason for pride" in saying that the Egyptians have constantly supported their governments no matter what. To say that the Egyptians accept any treatment and any policy of their rulers is "a blatant condemnation" of the Egyptian people and their history. Husayn says: It hurts us deeply to be described by our ruler in the late 20th century as slaves, while at the same time he declares his "respect for plurality in Israel."

Regarding the killing of the Egyptian POW's, Mubarak said that he does not want to create an issue between the two states, that it is a problem of individuals, that Egyptian public opinion takes the issue very seriously, and that he cannot oppose Egyptian public opinion. Husayn says that Mubarak thus "draws a line between himself and Egyptian public opinion" and considers himself to be "forced" to take this issue into consideration. Husayn says he expected President Mubarak to bitterly express his feelings and then mention public opinion.

Husayn notes that in a message to the Israeli Government, Mubarak said: "Since you have raised this issue, please conduct an investigation into it, as we previously had no idea about it." Husayn says that President Mubarak treats this major issue too lightly, and the statement of the government's ignorance of the issue offends all Egyptian security agencies. Husayn says Egyptians were embarrassed to see a special CNN program on the mass graves of Egyptians in Sinai when Egyptian Television had failed to cover it. President Mubarak went so far as to say that he did not want to create a problem for Rabin over the POW issue during the negotiations with the Palestinians. Husayn wonders why Mubarak does not show the same attitude to the Egyptian opposition. He wonders why Mubarak has not decided to abolish the emergency law that has been in effect for 14 years and that there is no need for military courts.

Husayn notes that while the U.S. stance calls for a dialogue with the moderate Islamists, President Mubarak

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believes that there are no moderates. Husayn asks: "Is it reasonable that President Mubarak should be more hostile to the Islamic movement than the U.S. Government?" He says that Mubarak has claimed that the Muslim Brothers now on trail carried arms even though the indictment does not mention this at all. Mubarak even accused the Muslim Brothers of assassinating al-Sadat when everyone knows that the killers never joined the Muslim Brotherhood. They were members of the al-Jiahd, which is opposed to the Muslim Brotherhood's course.

When asked if the government is in control of the security situation and if terrorism has visibly retreated even though he is facing a growing ideological attempt to give an Islamic character to Egyptian society, President Mubarak gave the astonishing reply "this issue is not so dangerous." Husayn claims that President Mubarak considers Islam to be dangerous and thus declared bluntly that he is "against the Islamic character." This is counter to the Constitution, which stipulates that Egypt's state religion is Islam and that Islamic shar'iah is the basic source of legislation. This stance also contradicts President Mubarak's speeches on certain religious occasions. Referring to Mubarak's stance on Jerusalem, Husayn says he is free with statements declaring his acceptance of Jerusalem's unity and rejecting its partition. Husayn says Mubarak cannot decide about Jerusalem and that he "owes an apology to the nation."

WRITER ATTRIBUTES EXTREMISM, TERRORISM TO CORRUPTION

Dr. Ni'mat Ahmad Fu'ad writes a 2,000-word open letter to President Mubarak on page 3 entitled "Is the Minister Telling the Truth?" She discusses various attempts in the past few years to build on the pyramids plateau and the opposition she has mounted along with various international and local organizations concerned with Egypt's archaeological sites. She claims that Culture Minister Faruq Husni is concealing the truth from President Mubarak regarding the nature of building activity on these sites. She asserts that no effort to eliminate terrorism and extremism will bear fruit as long as the crushed youths see government officials violating their time-honored traditions and history. She asks President Mubarak about examples in religion, patriotism, honesty, and culture that the youths may emulate. She asks how the youths can agree to see their archaeological sites and history being plundered, marred, and misused. She says that such repression fans the feelings of wrath among the crushed and encourages extremism and terrorism among the youths. She says the Egyptian people can tolerate many difficulties and hardships as long as their national and religious sanctities are safe. Should these sanctities be harmed, she argues, their patience might turn, with unpredictable consequences. She says the primary way to address terrorism, which is worrying the Egyptian people, is "to eliminate corruption everywhere."

DETAINED BROTHERS URGE MUBARAK TO RECONSIDER MILITARY TRIALS

In a 1,500-word report on page 4, Qutb al-'Arabi cites remarks by Muslim Brotherhood leaders after the second hearing at the military court. He notes that they stressed their trial case is "primarily political" and that the goal is to "keep them away" from taking part in the elections. They expressed their thanks and appreciation for all the nationalist forces that supported their cause. They called for the unity of the nationalist forces to "confront" the National Democratic Party in the elections. They also called on President Mubarak to "reconsider the decision to refer them to the military court, which shocked people at home and abroad." He cites Dr. 'Isam al-'Aryan urging all honest people to participate in the elections to defend Egypt's future and to change the face of the next People's Assembly. He urges all parties and political forces to agree among themselves to confront the ruling party's "corruption and domination." He calls on President Mubarak to reconsider the "unjust decision" and to "rise above involving the Armed Forces in political animosity," since he is the leader of the National Democratic Party and at the same time the supreme commander of the Armed Forces. He calls on President Mubarak to release all political detainees, as he did after the assassination of former President al-Sadat, and to meet with them and listen to their views so that no unfair and biassed verdicts can be passed against them.

BRITISH LAWYERS CRITICIZE MB TRIAL BY MILITARY COURTS

A 750-word report by Khalid Yunus on page 2 notes that a delegation of British lawyers held a news conference in a Cairo hotel on 2 September. They stressed their rejection of the trial of Muslim Brothers before a military court, because, they said, they belong to "a peaceful group seeking change through peaceful means." The lawyers said it is surprising that the Muslim Brotherhood does not enjoy the high appreciation and respect of the Egyptian Government. They said this is the first time they have heard of civilians being tried before a military court. They said the sovereignty of law is paralyzed by the emergency law.

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MB LEADER SLAMS MUBARAK'S CRITICAL REMARKS

In a 1,600-word article on page 5, Muhammad Ma'mun al-Hudaybi, who is identified as the Muslim Brotherhood's general guide and official spokesman, says the Egyptian people and parties hoped the 1995 elections would be free and honest and express their aspirations. But the government "shocked the public" by detaining an elite of brilliant men. The government said their crime is that they belong to the Muslim Brotherhood and that they held a peaceful meeting to consider taking part in the elections. Even though all parties denounced and protested the unfair measures, the authorities did not respect public opinion or the people's will. This was manifest in "a plot concocted by the authorities" represented in a law that "assassinates" the freedom of the press. He says that although the elections are drawing near the authorities still deny parties the right to hold rallies to explain their programs. The ruling authorities made things worse by referring the Muslim Brothers to the military court. The people and all parties except the ruling party denounced the decision. But the government took no notice.

Al-Hudaybi notes that in an interview with LE FIGARO days before the military tribunal, President Mubarak said the Muslim Brothers had committed a crime of sabotage and that he and the Muslim Brothers held a dialogue until they took up arms. Al-Hudaybi says he regrets that reports submitted to President Mubarak are false, because "none of the Muslim Brothers carried arms against anyone" and there is no evidence that Muslim Brothers carried weapons. He asks how President Mubarak can say the Muslim Brothers carried arms when the official charge against them is that they discussed peaceful participation in the elections. He notes that the Muslim Brothers participated in previous elections in a peaceful and civilized way and no one ever accused them of any legal mishap. He also wonders how President Mubarak can say that the Muslim Brothers engaged in sabotage. He asks if it is "reasonable to think that such a distinguished elite of university professors might conceive of any subversive act." What is more serious, he says, is that President Mubarak is the supreme commander of the Armed Forces, that all officers take the oath of allegiance to him, and that he has absolute power to appoint officers or terminate their services. And since Mubarak emphasized the accusation and conviction, what would be the feelings of the defendants, their families, and all the people, he asks.

CAIRO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS CALL FOR HALT TO MILITARY TRIALS

An 80-word report on page 8 by 'Ala' al-Bahhar says that Cairo University students have denounced the referral of the Muslim Brothers to a military court on charges of expressing their views and seeking to participate in the elections. In a statement released on 29 September, the students warned against Army interference in civilian affairs, called for halting military trials of civilians, and stressed the need to refer them to civil courts.

In a 300-word boxed column on the same page, Ahmad 'Izz-al-Din says that this year for the first time the people heard that there is a day celebrating the military courts. The ceremony on that day was unusual. A prestigious meeting was held attended by the People's Assembly speaker; the defense, interior, and justice ministers; and dozens of senior personalities. He says that at the meeting everyone vied in praising the armed forces and its judiciary. The television devoted a program on 29 September to lengthy portions of the ceremony. The writer says that the message was clear: It was due to the trial of the Muslim Brothers the next day. The writer says that no one in the government or opposition differs over the importance of the military judiciary, but the point is whether the military judiciary has jurisdiction to try civilian defendants. 'Izz-al-Din asks the lawyers if it is permissible for the prosecutor and the judge to be the same person. He notes that by his successive statements attacking the Muslim Brothers, President Mubarak, "regrettably placed himself in the position of the prosecution." He asks if President Mubarak should be the person to whom the verdict of the military court will be submitted for ratification. He also asks if it is right that the defendants may submit a plea—the only way to appeal under military law—to the very person who criticizes them on every occasion.

ISLAMIC CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE CALL FOR ESTABLISHING BLOCS

In a 350-word report on page 8, Ahmad 'Abd-al-Mun'im and Dawud Hasan report that private sector representatives of 30 Islamic countries and more than 400 investors and businessmen from various Islamic countries met for three days to discuss economic cooperation among the countries of the Organization of Islamic Conference. Egyptian ministers attending the conference called for establishing Islamic economic alliances and an Islamic common market to confront international cartels and protect the Islamic identity.

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WRITER VIEWS AMERICAN JEWISH CAMPAIGN AGAINST MUSLIMS

In a 1,000-word article on page 9 entitled "Dr. Abu-Marzuq and U.S. Justice," Dr. Ahmad Jalal Kishk describes attempts by American Jewish organizations to stem the mounting political activities and influence of the Arab and Muslim organizations and students in the United States. He argues that the Jewish organizations use anti-Arab and anti-Muslim feelings and the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York to distort the image of Arabs and Muslims in the United States. He notes that the nascent Islamic pressure groups in the United States moved to oppose attempts to pass a law allowing U.S. authorities to submit secret evidence against any resident alien. This prompted the Islamic organizations to seek to exercise their political rights. The writer criticizes the Arab countries for supporting this law. He says "this law would destroy the ability of American Islamic and Arabic organizations to pressure the U.S. Government to alter its policy and be more fair to the Arabic and Islamic peoples." He says that the arrest of Dr. Abu-Marzuq is in line with this law. He contends that the U.S. Department of Justice has no evidence against Abu-Marzuq and so they want to hand him over to Israel. He claims that the Israeli Justice Ministry advised Prime Minister Rabin not to agree to receive Abu-Marzuq because it has no concrete evidence against him.

WRITER SAYS ISRAELIS KILLED SOLDIERS, CIVILIANS IN SINAI

In a 2,500-word back page article entitled "The Slaughtered in Sinai Were Military and Civilians," Dr. Mahjub 'Umar says that after the massacres committed by the Israeli officers and soldiers in Sinai during the 1956 and the 1967 wars were revealed the media and people talked of the issue as if only POW's were murdered in those wars. This helps the Israelis deal with the issue as one of war crimes or the violation of military instructions by some officers. He claims that according to the confessions of Israeli generals, many civilians working in quarries and oil installations were also killed. He argues that handling the issue as one of the killing of POW's would dilute the crime. He urges the Egyptian authorities to call the Israelis to account, to seek compensation for the victims' families, and to erect statutes at tourist sites in Sinai for the martyrs to commemorate them.

SEIZURE OF ISLAMIC BOOKS AT AIRPORTS CRITICIZED

In his regular back page column "Country Folk," Islamic writer Muhammad 'Abd-al-Quddus relates in 500 words the story of his arrival at Cairo Airport from a trip to Morocco a few days ago. He says State intelligence agencies seized his passport and detained him for a long time. He notes that many other Egyptians have been treated in the same way, most notably, a famous Islamic scholar, the author of a book that is an international authority on worship. 'Abd-al-Quddus says his bags were searched and most of his books, particularly books on Islamic topics and shari'ah, which he brought from Morocco, were seized. He questions the Egyptian Government's "sensitivity toward Islamic shari'ah." He asks what age we are living in and whether the courts of inquisition have been revived. He argues that the "despotic mentality" that confiscates books and rules Egypt is the same that brings civilians to military courts and imprisons thousands of innocent people. It is the same mentality that will "organize" the elections. He says: I am afraid the next Peoples's Assembly will be "a fiasco" as long as the dictatorship supervises the elections.

WRITER URGES OPPOSITION PARTIES TO ESTABLISH RADIO, TELEVISION

In an appeal of 700 words to the opposition parties on the back page entitled "The Official Media is Biased; What Are You Going to Do?" al-Sayyid al-Ghadban says he would have liked Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif not to discuss the official media's stance on the election campaign, because he knows the real stance and that the official television and radio programs devote several hours a day to relaying the rallies held in the various governorates. The ministers exploit these rallies for propaganda purposes and lavish their praise on the government's performance. The writer says President Mubarak himself chooses the candidates of the ruling National Democratic Party. He stresses that the official media are devoted to the ruling party candidates. That the radio and television grant a few minutes to the opposition parties cannot be described as fair or balanced. Talk that the media are neutral is intended to paint a better picture of the government, which strongly rejects guarantees for free elections. He says that since this is the reality of the official media and of the government's stance, he cannot understand the opposition parties' position on this important issue. He notes that the opposition parties have for years been calling for a change in this situation, but to no avail. He contends that it is futile to think the official media will be neutral or balanced. He stresses that the most formidable weapon the government wields in the political struggle is the radio and television. He urges the opposition parties to act seriously and to establish their own radio and television stations to air their views.

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Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat on Elections Schedule, Participants

JN1110193795 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat hoped that the Israeli Government will commit itself to the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, which deals with implementing the second stage of the Declaration of Principles. He also hoped that it will end the settlers' acts against the Palestinians.

In an interview with the German newspaper DER SPIEGEL, President 'Arafat said that Palestinian legislative elections will be held after several months and that all political factions will be allowed to take part in these elections without restrictions. President 'Arafat added that Palestinian investors are reluctant to invest in the homeland because of the general political situation which has decisively changed at this stage. He noted that many Palestinian businessmen around the world would like to contribute to building the Palestinian state. He expected the West Bank and Gaza Strip to witness real economic prosperity in the near future.

'Arafat, Officials on Prisoners, Other Issues

JN1110135195 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1210 GMT 11 Oct 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nu; from the "Today's Events" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat emphasized the importance of releasing Palestinian prisoners, including female prisoners, from Israeli prisons in accordance with the agreement that was signed in Washington recently. President 'Arafat was answering a question posed by journalists today on releasing a number of prisoners yesterday.

The agreement on the second stage of the Declaration of Principles that was signed in Washington calls for freeing all female prisoners in the first batch after the signing of the agreement, in addition to releasing old and sick prisoners and those who have served two thirds of their prison sentences.

For his part, Hisham 'Abd-al-Raziq, member of the Detainees Committee in the negotiations, considered the release of a number of prisoners yesterday as something that has nothing to do with the agreement because it took place unilaterally. He stressed that all female prisoners should freed in the first batch in accordance with the agreement. 'Abd-al-Raziq said the Palestinian side is prepared to receive the Arab prisoners.

Meanwhile, Major General Ziyad al-Atrash, the official in charge of the Liaison Security Committee, stressed the importance of implementing what has been agreed upon concerning redeployment and the assumption of tasks in the West Bank by the Palestinian police.

Al-Atrash told Voice of Palestine that the Palestinian and Israeli sides did not reach an agreement on a timetable for redeployment during their meeting that was held in Jericho yesterday.

He said the Palestinian side did not accept the Israeli proposal to complete redeployment from Janin—which, according to the agreement, is the first city from which redeployment should take place—on 19 November. He stressed the Palestinian position that redeployment from Janin should be completed by 25 October. He said the Israelis are using weak pretexts, especially linking deployment to construction of bypass roads.

Al-Atrash expected that political differences will take place if redeployment in the West Bank is delayed, and he said these differences may influence Palestinian participation in the Amman economic conference this month. He criticized Israel's procrastination in implementing the agreement.

No other date was set to resume the joint committee to work out a timetable because they are awaiting for a new Israeli position.

'Arafat Urges Donors To Increase Financial Aid

JN1010212295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 10 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat asked the donor states today to increase their aid and to fulfill their pledges to the National Authority. This came at the opening session of the joint liaison committee of the donor states at the office of Terje Larsen, coordinator of UN activities in Palestine. The meeting is being attended by the major donor states, the United Nations, the World Bank, and the parties to the peace process. 'Arafat said that the donor states must pay the salaries of the policemen and the cost of their equipment, noting the difficult economic situation resulting from Israel's closure of the Palestinian areas and from the obstacles facing the peace process created by Israel's slow implementation of the Declaration of Principles.

Today's meeting was devoted to removing the obstacles to the peace process, to offer aid to the Palestinian people, and to study their needs following the signing of the Taba agreement.

For his part, Larsen said that the meeting was good, adding that the Israeli closure of the Palestinian areas was strongly criticized. The stands of the donor states and the Palestinian Authority were in harmony with the priorities of the peace process.

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'Arafat Attack on Iran 'Music to Ears of U.S.'

NC1110111995 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 2 Oct 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington—Self-Rule Authority Chairman Yasir 'Arafat launched a harsh attack on Iran and the Shiites, accusing them of attempting to sabotage the peace process and control Palestinian decisionmaking. 'Arafat was addressing a private dinner attended by U.S. House of Representatives members. According to sources who attended the dinner organized by representatives, including Nick Rahhal and Ray Lahhud, who are of Lebanese origin, 'Arafat used the words "Iran" and "Shiites" synonymously. He said Iran backs Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and gives it logistic and financial support. He also renewed the accusation that sources in the United States fund Hamas, a charge repeated by Israel.

Asked about his funding sources, 'Arafat said he gets aid from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar. Quizzed about Kuwait, he accused it of assisting Hamas and withholding Palestinian funds.

According to the sources, it is clear that 'Arafat, who leveled at least three accusations at the Shiites, did this deliberately because he believes such talk is music to the ears of the United States.

Hamas To Negotiate 'National Unity' With 'Arafat

NC1110200095 Paris AFP in English 1910GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Gaza City, Gaza Strip, Oct 11 (AFP) — The hardline Moslem fundamentalist group Hamas will meet soon with Yasir 'Arafat's Palestinian Authority to sign an "accord of national unity," a Hamas official said Wednesday [11 October].

Mahmud Zahhar, who acts as spokesman for the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), told reporters that the meeting would take place in two to three weeks in Cairo or Sudan.

"We are going to reach a final agreement on national unity and a democratic system," said Zahhar, who was released from jail on Sunday in the latest sign of a thaw between 'Arafat and anti-Israeli militants.

The Hamas delegation will include Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, West Bank and abroad, he said.

Four of the group's members were to return late Wednesday from a visit to Sudan, where they sounded out their exiled leaders on a possible reconciliation with the self-rule authority.

Hamas, which opposes the Israeli-PLO autonomy accords and has launched a string of deadly bombings, has been trying to hammer out a working relationship with the Palestinian Authority for months.

In a statement issued in Damascus Tuesday, the fundamentalist group said it wanted to establish "stable relations" with the self- rule authority based on each side "recognizing the right to resist (Israeli) occupation."

'Arafat has given Israeli leaders a commitment to end attacks by radical Palestinian groups.

Ties between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority reached rock- bottom on November 18, 1994, when clashes between police and Hamas supporters left 13 dead and more than 200 wounded.

Hamas Statement: 'No Agreement' at Khartoum

MM1110112895 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Oct 95 p 4

[Report by Kamal Hamid: "Stressing Its Desire for Dialogue, Hamas Says: No Agreement in Khartoum Meetings"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, Khartoum, AL-HAYAH — The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) has stressed its desire to hold a "real and full" dialogue with the Palestinian Authority [PA]. However, it stressed that the meetings held by its representatives in Khartoum have not produced any agreement.

This came in a statement issued by the movement yesterday, of which AL-HAYAH has obtained a copy. The statement said that a delegation from the movement met in Khartoum "with some figures from the Gaza Strip, who are making endeavors to arrange a constructive and fruitful dialogue with the PA. During the meeting, which was dominated by a positive atmosphere, consultations were conducted over a number of issues concerning relations between Hamas and the PA. The movement stressed its eagerness to build a stable relationship with the PA on the basis of each side maintaining its own political convictions, to safeguard the Palestinian people's unity and their higher interests, and to recognize their right to resist the occupation wherever it is."

The statement added: "While we value the positive dialogue in the Khartoum meetings, we in Hamas stress that the meeting did not produce, nor was it required to produce, any agreements or commitments vis-a-vis halting resistance operations against the Zionist occupation or as regards any other specific issues, except to express the movement's agreement to resume the dialogue with the PA.

"We stress our desire to engage in a real and comprehensive dialogue with the PA with an open agenda and without any prior conditions from either party. We say

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that the PA is the one responsible for the failure of the Khartoum dialogue to which the movement had agreed. We urge it to announce a clear position on this question away from the method of casting doubt and the exposed media leaks."

In Khartoum, Muhammad Nazzal, member of the Hamas Political Bureau, met with Dr. Hasan al-Turabi (chairman of the Arab Islamic People's Congress). Nazzal said that the aim of the meeting was to brief al-Turabi on developments in the inter-Palestinian dialogue.

Hamas Issues Statement; Fatah Officers Seek Entry

TA1110112995 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in the Gaza Strip has issued a statement saying it is willing to resume the dialogue with the Palestinian Authority [PA] and that it is interested in establishing stable relations with it. The statement adds, however, that Hamas wants to reserve the right to oppose the Israeli occupation everywhere. The Hamas statement refers to the mission of the four Hamas leaders who have left the Gaza Strip for Sudan for a meeting with the Hamas leadership abroad. The statement says that the meeting in Khartoum was not aimed at discussing a halt to the attacks in Israel. The delegation is slated to return to the Gaza Strip from Egypt today.

Sources in the PA say that 400 more officers belonging to Fatah's western sector — the organization's terror apparatus — are waiting in Arab states. The sources told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that the PA has submitted the names of these officers to Israel for approval of their entry to the autonomy area, but so far they have not been approved.

Hamas: U.S. Responsible for Abu-Marzuq's Life

MM1210094995 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 12 Oct 95 p 4

[Unattributed report: "Hamas Holds U.S. Administration Fully Responsible for Abu-Marzuq's Life"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-HAYAH — The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) has held the U.S. Administration fully responsible for the life of Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, head of its Political Bureau, who has been held in New York since 25 July.

The movement pointed out in a statement, of which AL-HAYAH has obtained a copy, that Abu-Marzuq's health is deteriorating. "He is suffering from ill health as a result of the failure to offer him the necessary and medical treatment and medical care required for diabetes. As a result, he has lost a lot of weight."

The movement expressed its "utmost discontent at the prison management's deliberate delay in conducting the necessary tests and providing the medical treatment and medicine for Dr. Abu-Marzuq, in addition to its failure to provide meals suitable for diabetics." The movement stressed that it is holding "the U.S. Administration fully responsible for Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq's life and whatever happens to him as a result of his arbitrary detention."

Hamas Official Talks of 'Trust' After Release

MM1110132195 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 10 Oct 95 p 1

[Report by Husayn Hijazi: "Al-Zahhar Tells AL-HAYAH: Atmosphere With National Authority Inspires Satisfaction and Trust"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza — Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, spokesman for the Islamic Resistance Movement [Hamas], said in Gaza on the morning of his release that he had told the Palestinian Authority [PA] that he hoped that his release from jail with the rest of his companions was another good gesture to be added to the good relations between the two sides, pointing out that the present atmosphere inspires "satisfaction and trust."

Al-Zahhar, one of the most prominent Hamas leaders, refused to talk about the 105 days he spent in jail, preferring instead to look to the future. Nevertheless, he saw the whole episode — his arrest and release — as predestined.

Al-Zahhar said that with the exception of the first 24 hours after his arrest, which he would prefer to forget, the remaining period of his imprisonment was normal and marked by good treatment. He added that he has come out with a better impression than before, since his incarceration and that of his companions may have contributed to the success of the efforts to achieve accord and Palestinian unity "which is more precious than anything."

On the future of relations with the PA, al-Zahhar said that he was, and still is, an advocate of dialogue and one of those pushing for an agreement. He expressed his optimism that the Palestinians will succeed in that because they decided from the start that infighting between them was not an option. He wished the Hamas delegation, which has traveled to Sudan for consultations with Hamas leaders abroad, success in its mission "because there is no alternative to reaching a joint formula between the two wings of this people, Fatah and Hamas, for the building of the common

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homeland." Al-Zahhar added that he is waiting to receive the official text of the Oslo-2 agreement in order to study it and "adopt the appropriate stand toward it," indicating that this agreement has in any case become a reality.

IDF Forces Withdraw From 3 West Bank Towns

JN1110175695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli occupation forces withdrew from the towns of Qabatiyah, Yattah, and Kharbata today. They evacuated the occupation's administration offices in the three Palestinian towns within the framework of transferring civil powers to the National Authority. The hand over ceremonies were attended on one side by representatives from the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the Fatah Movement as well as political figures and by officials in the occupation's civil administration in the West Bank, on the other. The Israeli authorities evacuated their forces from the town of Salfit yesterday.

More details about the withdrawal of occupation forces from the town of Kharbata are in the following dispatch by our correspondent Rashid Hilal.

[Begin Hilal recording] In a popular ceremonial atmosphere, the Palestinian side received from the Israeli side the keys of the occupation's civil administration office in the town of Kharbata in the subdistrict of Ramallah this afternoon. The Palestinian side was represented by Hasan Abu-Hashish, the Palestinian liaison officer. The Israeli side was represented by the deputy military governor of the Ramallah area. Immediately after receiving the occupation's civil administration office, Abu-Hashish said that this hand over means the beginning of the end of Israeli occupation of Palestinian cities, towns, and villages. He added that handing over the occupation's civil administration offices comes within the framework of implementing the Taba agreement. He hoped that these steps will continue so that they will be crowned with the establishment of a Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital. Soon after the occupation forces left the occupation's civil administration office, Palestinian flags were hoisted on top of that building. The masses walked the village streets in a ceremonial march, in which the participants chanted patriotic slogans. Folkloric dances were performed to express joy and happiness on this occasion. [end recording]

Sha'th Interviewed on Israeli Troop Deployment

NC1210093595 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 12 Oct 95

[Telephone interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, PA minister of planning and international cooperation, in Gaza, by Fawzi al-Jindi, in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program —-recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Jindi] Can you shed some light on the steps already taken concerning the withdrawal of the Israeli troops from villages in the West Bank?

[Sha'th] In fact, what the Israelis have done so far has nothing to do with the agreement we signed. They are merely trying to divert attention and give the erroneous impression that they have actually started to implement the agreement. The agreement provides that within no more than 10 days of the signing, the Israeli troops will withdraw from the city of Janin and its suburbs. The withdrawal will then be extended to Qalqilya, Tulkarm, Nabulus, Bethlehem, Ramallah, and then Hebron. Withdrawal from all these areas, except Hebron, is supposed to be concluded before the end of the year. Withdrawal from Hebron is supposed to be accomplished by March, six months after signing.

So far, the Israelis have not withdrawan from Janin. They are still procrastinating about withdrawal acccording to schedule. But to deceive world opinion and the states that cosigned the agreement into believing that they are serious in implementing it, they have withdrawn from four Palestinian villages. Withdrawal from these villages should have been done simultaneously with their withdrawal from Janin. This certainly does not fulfil the terms of the agreement and the timetable signed in Washington.

[Al-Jindi] The Palestinians are certainly used to this behavior by Israeli neogitators. Actual implementation never follows the terms of agreement. This has always been Israel's habit.

[Sha'th] But we do not accept such habits. We fight such conduct because the road is still long and we have to wrest back our Palestinian lands inch by inch and restore our waters drop by drop. This cannot be done by accepting what they are doing, but through continuous struggle to make them respect the agreements we signed honestly and objectively.

[Al-Jindi] During your recent meetings with Israeli officials, did you sense any tendency to disregard the time factor in implementing this agreement?

[Sha'th] Of course they need to implement this agreement before the economic summit in Amman. I believe

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that they do not want that summit to be dominated by an atmosphere like that which prevailed at last year's Casablanca summit. They want the peace process to continue win them advantages just as they managed to get in the early stages of the peace process—the worldwide economic and political gains they made. No doubt they will implement the agreement, but the timing and details are very important.

[Al-Jindi] Do you think that Yitzhaq Rabin is intent on closing the Palestinian file completely before the next year's Israeli elections?

[Sha'th] I think that this would be much better for him. But so far, Rabin does not seem serious about closing this file completely. The most he promises is to implement the transitional agreement before reaching a final solution. However, if I were in his place I would step up efforts to reach the final solution before the elections.

[Al-Jindi] It is said that lately Rabin has been trying to cater to Jewish extremists in order to guarantee his success in the coming elections.

[Sha'th] This is a double-edged sword, because he will not be able to indulge the Israeli rightists like Benjamin Netanyahu and the other extremists do. But he is losing the ability to go to the elections and tell the Israeli people: Look what I have done for you; I have succeeded with the peace process where Likud failed.

I believe that an honest and thorough implementation of the agreement is in everybody's interest.

[Al-Jindi] Let us talk about the Palestinian elections slated for May 1996. There are proposals being submitted at the domestic level to guarantee that the elections involve all the Palestinians. It has been said lately that contacts are under way between the Palestinian Authority [PA] and several opposition movements to prepare for the success of these elections.

[Sha'th] We hope the elections will be held before that date, and not later than March. If the Israelis had followed the timetable, we could have held the elections in January, before the month of Ramadan.

However, we want these elections to involve all the nationwide powers and to be democratic. Therefore we are trying to reach an agreement with all the parties on that issue.

[Al-Jindi] Are there assurances that these elections will be free and clean?

[Sha'th] They will certainly be so. We reached agreement with 15 European Union countries, plus Japan, Canada, Egypt, and Jordan, for the elections to be internationally monitored. The EU has provided us with funds to recruit and train 7,000 Palestinians to supervise the elections. These elections will be held under worldwide scrutiny and must be free and clean so that they will be a source of pride for the Palestinian people before the world.

[Al-Jindi] Will the expansion of Palestinian autonomy to the villages and cities of the occupied West Bank add to the PA's financial burden?

[Sha'th] Nobody complains of the burdens involved in liberating his country. Although international assistance has been slow in coming, we in Gaza and Jericho have succeeded in considerably reducing the deficit one year after the liberation of those areas. Only 25 percent of that deficit is financed with international assistance. The Palestinian people undertook the heaviest share of Gaza and Jericho budget. We will do the same thing in the West Bank, God willing.

'Urayqat Urges Israel To Stop Violating Taba

JN1110193295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government, called on the Israeli Government to stop violating the Taba agreement and to show its good intentions toward rendering its implementation a success. This came during a meeting he held with members of the committee in charge of defending 17 houses, which the Civil Administration decided to demolish in al-Hadba' area near al-'Ayzariyah. 'Urayqat said that the agreement was reached with the committee members to supply the necessary documents in order to follow up the case during the upcoming meeting of the steering and control committee which stems from the recent Taba agreement.

Japan To Build West Bank-Gaza 'Raised Highway'

NC1210102695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0900 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London, 12 Oct (MENA)—The newspaper AL-SHARQ AL-ASWSAT says today that the Japanese government has promised the Palestinian National Authority that it will build a "raised highway" between the West Bank and Gaza Strip to avoid the sieges and border closures to which Israel frequently resorts for security reasons. The project will cost $250 million.

The London-based Arabic language newspaper quotes Palestinian sources as saying that this will be a four-lane divided highway. It will start in the Hebron area south of Jerusalem and end near the Erez checkpoint at the northern border of the Gaza Strip. [passage omitted]

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Oman, Kazakhstan Recognize Palestinian Passport

JN1010211695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 10 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Oman and Kazakhstan have recognized the Palestinian passport issued by the National Authority.

Two separate memorandums said the governments of Oman and Kazakhstan instructed the competent circles in their countries to adopt the Palestinian passport as an official Palestinian document, exactly like other Arab passports.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Israel Offers New Proposal on Female Prisoners

TA1210074995 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A new proposal has been made to resolve the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians on the release of prisoners in the framework of last month's Washington agreement. Israeli officials have proposed that four women prisoners, who were refused pardons by the president and the head of Central Command, be freed instead in the next batch, just before Palestinian elections in the West Bank and Gaza. Under the proposal, the Klugman Committee will be asked to approve the release of the prisoners.

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Algeria

Nahnah Urges Impartial Elections, Coalition

LD0910172595 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1222 GMT 9 Oct 95

[Report on news conference held by Mahfoud Nahnah, presidential candidate and HAMAS leader, with unidentified correspondents at El Djazair Hotel in Algiers on 8 October — Nahnah's remarks are recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Correspondent] A week after the expiry of the specified period for collecting signatures, Mr. Mahfoud Nahnah, one of the presidential candidates, and leader of HAMAS [Islamic Society Movement], organized a news conference last night in which he reviewed a number of issues connected with the presidential elections. The journalists' questions revolved around the circumstances of collecting the signatures, and the movement's program for the coming 16 November [election date]. Mr. Nahnah insisted at the beginning on pointing out the aim of this meeting. He said:

[Nahnah] We hope that our people will head to the ballot box over the coming days without feeling pressurized, coerced, and frightened, and without having the feeling that their will and choice have been tampered with. [passage omitted]

We inform you that our meeting today is not an election campaign, as some mass media attempt to depict it, but it falls within the framework of the series of informing the general public of the need to go to the ballot box. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Concerning a question in connection with the movement's position if any practices violating the democratic principle take place, Mr. Nahnah answered:

[Nahnah] First, the people should be told of the truth of the situation; second, the joint independent commission bears its responsibility in providing the truth; and third, there will be international organizations that will come to monitor the elections. I imagine that the first observer after God Almighty is the Algerian people. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Concerning the presence of foreign observers, and the importance of that for the credibility and impartiality of the elections, the HAMAS leader said:

[Nahnah] First, the fundamental [religious] concept says that what cannot be comprehended in its totality, most of it should not be abandoned. If there was no confidence in the Algerian people, and there were no guarantees from external organizations, and the joint commission, this would mean that the Algerian people were still suffering from the complex of lack of confidence. We believe that giving the signatures on the previous applications, which are in hundreds of thousands, is considered an indication that confidence has started to return. [passage omitted]

We have offered in the previous dialogue with the presidency what we have agreed or differed on [as heard]. We agreed on observers from abroad, but we mentioned that there should be observers from the Arab parliament, the African parliament, and the European parliament, as an indication of opposition, because the official bodies in general want to deal with officials. Despite that we said we should continue on the road, because we have confidence in the UN impartiality in this respect, in connection with the Algerian elections. On the other hand, we have confidence in the OAU in connection with the issue of Algeria's elections, and we also have confidence in the Arab League, if it agrees to take part in this affair. As to whether these guarantees were sufficient, I said they were insufficient. But the best guarantee, and I hope the mass media will record it with us, is the people's turnout at the ballot box without coercion.

[Correspondent] Among the questions which were addressed to Mr. Nahnah were those in connection with the absence of some political parties from the presidential elections, and their effect on the process, Mr. Nahnah has a different opinion of the matter, where he says:

[Nahnah] You say that the Sant'Egidio group's boycotting [of the elections] will affect them. We will leave this to the coming days, though we have convincing evidence that the Algerian people actually want to get out of the circles of pressure — be it political pressure, security pressure, pressure of the confrontations, pressure of the rotten political system, and pressure of some rotten opportunistic and self-interest seeking administrators — the Algerian people want to have their word with complete transparency and credibility, and we encourage them in that.

[Correspondent] Concerning a question about the formation of the forthcoming authority should Nahnah win the presidential elections, he answered with the following:

[Nahnah] I have said that one specific person, group or party cannot resolve the Algerian problem. We have worked, with great regret, toward moving from the one-party system to another one-party system, but the two experiments have failed. Thus, in our view, a government, which we could call an alliance government, a reconciliation government, a brotherhood government, should be there at the beginning, a government in which the trends coexist. We call it a mosaic government. [passage omitted]

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[Correspondent] Concerning the movement's position toward the different political formations, and its view of reality, Mr. Nahnah classifies his movement within the following framework:

[Nahnah] Let it be known to everyone that we actually, truly and with true will represent the circle of dialogue, and the circle of the advocates of rupture. We seek change, and practise contact with righteousness and reform. [passage omitted]

Our program has not come from overseas, our program has its roots, as has become known, from deep inside Algeria, which we have called from the T to the T, from Tlemcen to Tebessa. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. Nahnah was optimistic when he answered a question in connection with the movement's capability to stop the bloodshed and achieve the political and security relaxation. He said:

[Nahnah] It is through the cooperation of the political class, and through the rejection of the policy of exclusion and marginalization of the true activities. Allow me to talk with you with credibility, the first activity is that of the scholars, researchers, and experts. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Finally, Mr. Nahnah stressed the need for the administration's neutrality to ensure the success of the elections. He said:

[Nahnah] You know that in order for the elections to be democratic, they should be impartial. We call and insist on the impartiality of the elections. This impartiality cannot be in the hands of the candidates, but basically in the hands of those who assume the reigns of power, be it the security aspect, the information aspect, the psychological aspect, or making the conditions available that will allow the citizen to express his view with complete freedom, and away from the pressures, or the forms of arbitrariness and terrorism. We say in all transparency that this requires a neutral administration. It requires a neutral administration which does not side with anyone. [passage omitted]

Rally for Culture Leader on Election Campaign

LD0510144795 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1220 GMT 4 Oct 95

[Interview with Dr. Said Saadi, leader of the Rally for Culture and Democracy and candidate in the presidential elections, by unidentified correspondents; place and date not given — live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Correspondent] Welcome, doctor.

[Saadi] Peace be on you.

[Correspondent] Dr. Said Saadi, you entered the electoral contest rather late. Why did you decide to take part in these elections?

[Saadi] First of all, I said from the very beginning that in order to reach a solution to this crisis there must be a break with the past, a break with the men of the current regime, and a break with current management practices. Therefore, I asked the present authorities to give guarantees, in other words political guarantees, administrative guarantees, and security guarantees.

I asked the authorities to give us some information on the security situation in order to know what to do in the election period for example. Moreover, I said that there must be political guarantees to make sure that those who have entered these elections will not take us back to the political situation which prevailed in 1991. I said that before a man can put himself forward before the Algerian people, he must first abide by some rules, namely democratic rules.

We cannot go back every month or every two months and talk about the republican system and wonder whether it can be respected or changed. I said that I could not accept that some elements of the democratic system be open to discussion.

As for the public administration, we are aware that for 30 years we lived under a one-party system and we are also aware that some traces of that system remain within the administration. Every time a man of the regime runs in the elections, the administration becomes a political tool in the hands of the men of the regime. I said that the administration should serve the interests of society. We must agree on this.

There is another problem. As you know, the democratic camp, to which we belong, was divided from the very first day, and we could not form one party. When I heard that Redha Malek announced his decision to run in the presidential elections, I said to myself that if there is wide public support for his decision then I would stand aside. I waited for 20 days, and I saw that the result of the process of collecting signatures was not that good. Therefore, as a member of the democratic camp, I said that I could not take a second risk in this electoral process. We had to be present.

[Correspondent] Have there been any contacts between the candidates from the democratic camp? For example, have there been contacts between yourself and Redha Malek?

[Saadi] Not since 20 August, the day of the announcement on the collecting of signatures. However, I can tell you now that for nine months I spent most of my efforts in contacts with the politicians in the democratic camp.

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I met with [former prime minister] Hamrouche and I met several times with [leader of the Ettahadi movement] Hachemi Cherif. I also met with Redha Malek and [former interior minister] Salim Sadi, and every representative of the civil movement in order to try to do something together. However, the democratic traditions, maybe, did not allow us to talk about this a second time. [sentence as heard].

[Correspondent] Indeed, we followed the activities of all the parties of the democratic camp which tried to form a coalition. Has there been any rapprochement between the candidates from the democratic camp?

[Saadi] In order to make the democratic culture tangible in society we must do more than we have so far. Moreover, the relations between politicians have not made it easy for us to reach a result in this objective.

I can tell you — and I am speaking for myself here, you can ask the others when you invite them here — I tried to get in touch with all the politicians who believe in democracy in this country. We know the outcome; let the people judge for themselves. If we meet here one day, every one will give his opinion and we will see who did something and who did not.

[Correspondent] Let us go back to the process of collecting signatures, how did the operation go? Were there any problems and obstructions and were there any facilities? How was it?

[Saadi] The presidential elections concern Citizen Said Saadi. I wanted to stress this point. There are parties which help the citizen but we are not entering parliamentary elections in which a party presents its program. It is not the same thing. In this particular case a citizen is putting himself forward to the people.

As for the process of collecting signatures, from the first day we went to see for ourselves and we realized that there was concern — we have to be honest about this. Two days later the situation improved, and we began collecting signatures. On the day that [President] Liamine Zeroual officially announced that he was running in the elections, the election administration office closed its doors to us for four days. The culture of the one-party system returned immediately. Now that the president was running in the elections, the assumption was that the administration could only serve the interests of the man of the regime.

[Correspondent] Was it a spontaneous reaction from the administrative staff?

[Saadi] It might have been the case for some. It seems to me that orders were issued and some administrative staff also overdid it a bit. We protested to the official authorities. We lost four days but afterwards the situation improved a bit.

However, despite all of this, I would like to mention that some civil servants refused to obey the orders they received regarding some operations aimed at serving the interest of the candidate of the regime. Those civil servants said: We are working for the administration and the administration works in the service of the state.

[Correspondent] In other words, with impartiality?

[Saadi] Yes. This makes me very happy indeed, and it is new in the life of the Algerian state. Maybe we should also talk about the things that have gone wrong in this administration, but there are men and women who refused to carry out orders, which harm the honor of the administration.

[Correspondent] Dr. Saadi, you are not officially a presidential candidate yet. You must wait for the decision of the Constitutional Council. Have you obtained 75,000 signatures?

[Saadi] I can tell you that we have sent over 220,000 signatures to the Constitutional Council.

[Correspondent] And from more than 25 provinces?

[Saadi] Yes, from 41 provinces. I am not counting the expatriates because we have had some problems in gathering their signatures.

[Correspondent] According to the press, some say that Said Saadi obtained 170,000 signatures.

[Saadi] No, this came from the Interior Ministry — on Tuesday, I think. But since Tuesday we have added some documents...

[Correspondent, interrupting] Dr. Saadi, sorry to interrupt you, but since you obtained more than 1,500 signatures from 41 provinces, does this mean that regionalism no longer applies to Dr. Saadi?

[Saadi] Personally, I never regarded myself as a regional politician; this was said by other people. I do not mind. [passage omitted]

We must come out of this culture of hearsay. I would also like to make an observation to you as journalists: Perhaps there is no need to spread such rumors. This kind of thing does not serve the country's interests. Personally, I do not care.

[Correspondent] Another thing we have noticed is your silence since 20 August during the process of collecting signatures. What is the reason for this silence?

[Saadi] Let me remind you that we began the operation on 6 September. We said that we would allow the

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citizens to work on the ground first and that we would not get too excited. Moreover, we said that the administration had to demonstrate awareness, and we wanted to see what our supporters were going to do on the ground. As for the media, we said that as soon as the results are known everybody will give their opinion. But since we were still operating on the ground, we had to protect the citizens who worked on the ground. Given the security situation, we decided to keep silent. It was a personal choice; it did not come from the media or the authorities. It was a personal choice made by us.

[Correspondent] How do you envision the electoral campaign, given the present security situation?

[Saadi] I can tell you that the violence we are seeing does not frighten the Algerians. There has been an overdose [preceding word spoken in French]. In order to scare someone there must be just a little violence. Now the Algerians have seen and heard and this violence has become the normal thing in society. It is counterproductive, and it does not pay. [preceding sentence spoken in French]. They cannot scare the people. I do not think that violence will affect the citizens during the elections. What I fear is manipulation by the regime. If the citizens see that we have not come out of the situation they were used to in the previous elections, they might turn their back on these elections.

Perhaps if the citizens look closer, they will find that we have not moved away from the previous experience [in multiparty elections] and maybe he will shun the elections. However, violence, as the late Tahar Djaout [first journalist to be killed in Algeria] said: If you keep quiet, you are dead. If you speak your mind, you are also dead. So, speak your mind and die as free men.

[Second unidentified correspondent] Does this mean that you [illegible] optimistic about the success of the elections?

[Saadi] Honestly, I have not heard much about this. I was in the west for four days, in Oran region. I did not notice that people were scared or running away. It seems to me that violence will not spoil the elections. We were told by the authorities that there are some measures to maintain peace on the day of the elections.

[First correspondent] Dr. Saadi, while waiting for the official announcement of the Constitutional Council, which is expected within the next ten days, there are some prominent figures who are going to enter the first round of the presidential elections. Have you thought, for example, about possible alliances, and so on?

[Saadi] I said on the first day when I officially announced my candidacy on Channel Three, concerning the democratic side — I am talking about the democratic side — I said that I would like the process of collecting signatures to take place in the first round. I said the person who collects the highest number of signatures should not do it at the expense of others among us democrats. He would become the natural candidate of the democrats. I made this proposal on the first day. It was not a political trick. The aim of the proposal was to have only one democrat candidate. There could be an Islamic candidate and a candidate of the regime. This would give a natural representation of the prevailing political environment in the country, whether we go for three or four candidates.

[Second correspondent] Does this mean that you would form an alliance with Redha Malek?

[Saadi] It is possible. One has to talk. I am ready to do so, and Redha Malek is my friend. To make things clear, I have no problems with him. I have seen him several times and we must talk and hold dialogue. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Are you optimistic about going to a second round?

[Saadi] I am optimistic about winning the election. I put forward my candidacy not to be a spectator. I entered the struggle from the first day and if I had seen that I would have no chance, I would not have put forward my candidacy. To make things clear, I am not here merely as decoration. I know what is taking place in our society, I know the history of our country, and I know what we can do if our generation wakes up and says: It is high time a new generation emerged in this country.

People talk about the break with the practices of the past, here is an opportunity for that break to take place.

[Correspondent] Dr. Saadi, in the event Liamine Zeroual or Mahfoud Nahnah go thorugh to the second round what will be your stand?

[Saadi] I will not accept that those two will be in the lead with me in third position. I am now in the lead. When they come here, ask them what they are going to do when I go through to the second round. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Is it possible to say that a break from past practice has actually begun?

[Saadi] We listen to the people saying we the citizens do not like this regime and we should change it. Even people who worked within the system for 30 years say a break with the past is something the citizens are waiting for. However, when someone who has worked within the system for 30 years claims he is striving for change, the citizen might say the whole thing could be a ploy. From the first day, I have been outside the system,

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waged struggle outside the system, therefore if I call for a break away I may have the right to do so. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. Saadi, in the event President Zeroual wins in the forthcoming elections, would you be prepared to work with him?

[Saadi] What can I say to you? To me, authority is a means and we have to prepare and define the program, with whom should we work and at what time we implement this program. All of these things we have not considered. I cannot tell whether I would or would not work with him. Some people take power then consider what to do. But not I. I have principles and objectives and if we agree on what to do, all is well and God bless. But if not, then I remain in opposition. Opposition is an institution which serves the interests of this country. Pluralism in elections came as a result of the opposition.

[Correspondent] Is your program ready for the presidential elections?

[Saadi] Generally my program is known in the country. However, with regard to the election campaign I respect the law and will publish it on 22 October, the day the campaign starts.

[Correspondent] A leader of an opposition party remarked that the elections have finished before they started. What is your view?

[Saadi] It seems to me that this leader has been in power for 30 years. And if I recall clearly, I heard him say: I would not go for election because there would be no democratic election! This party leader, who has been killing democracy for 30 years, is now apprehensive that there will be no democracy. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. Saadi, the last question: What is your view on the independent committee for supervising the elections?

[Saadi] It has not played the role as it should. The idea was to set up provincial groups throughout the national territory, but as of now...[pauses] We had a problem in Souk Ahras and we contacted them. In fact, they accepted their responsibility and they helped us and the officials who committed a crime against us in Souk Ahras were removed. They played their role. However, what is important to me is the election campaign. They must be present and they must play their role. We agreed with our representative about what he is to say there. We know the chairman of this committee and we must respect him. We have confidence in him.

[Correspondent] What about the international observers, from the United Nations, the Arab League, and the OAU who are going to be present with us in the presidential elections?

[Saadi] I was not here when the UN delegation came but I sent a letter to Mr. Butrus-Ghali and told him that the crisis we are living in Algeria is not only an Algerian crisis. Many people must be present here so that the administration will play its role and so that these elections, if we succeed in them — and may God make us succeed — will be an experience for other countries which have a similar crisis and which are going to hold elections. [passage omitted]

Party Leader Says Candidacy Prevented by Regime

MM1110103795 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Oct 95 p 6

[Interview with Ahmed Ben Mohamed, leader of the Contemporary Muslim Algeria party, by Kamil al-Tawil in London; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Tawil] Why did you fail to collect the signatures needed to bolster your presidential candidacy?

[Ben Mohamed] We were prevented by two means from continuing our candidacy. The Interior Ministry prevented us by a political, not administrative, decision from obtaining a candidacy form and a form for the required signatures. We were also prevented from announcing our candidacy on television. We learned later that the refusal to transmit our statement was the outcome of a decision from the presidency.

[Al-Tawil] And why is the presidency opposed to your candidacy?

[Ben Mohamed] The decision to prevent our candidacy is political, and there are numerous reasons. I give one example to prove it, namely that three candidates have been accepted without setting any conditions for them. They include the head of the regime [Liamine Zeroual]. The Interior Ministry offered no justification or explanation for its refusal to accept our candidacy and give us the forms. In fact the committee supposed to be assigned to oversee the elections did not provide us with any clarification as regards the Interior Ministry's rejection [of the candidacy application], although we kept going to the ministry for a whole week from Saturday 23 September. We had only 10 days within which to apply and to collect the signatures. The decision to prevent us from running in the elections means that the regime fears our entry into the competition ring — which is a political victory.

[Al-Tawil] And what is your position on the National Covenant?

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[Ben Mohamed] We are parties to the covenant and continue to adhere to it as a historical document with a future. However, our candidacy does not conflict with this covenant or the other parties to it. This is based on three aspects: First, the legal aspect, namely that the covenant stipulates that the parties consult with one another, but each party can make its own decisions independently. Second, the moral aspect. We informed the other parties to the covenant of our candidacy before we announced it. We told the parties that we had decided to oppose, not to boycott. That is, we decided to enter the ring to abort the regime's celebrations. Third, the political aspect, namely we are still committed to opposing the way the elections are organized by the regime.

The National Covenant did not issue any decision to boycott the elections. In fact the 27 August decision stipulated that the elections should be opposed, not boycotted. This formula was reached as a compromise between the boycott idea presented by the other seven parties to the covenant and the objection idea presented by the Contemporary Muslim Algeria party. Our party's proposal is binding on no one except the party itself.

We are committed to the National Covenant, and our decision to enter the elections was tactical. But the authorities obstructed it. Proof of the success of our decision to "oppose" is the fact that the authorities have prevented a political party from naming its leader as a candidate. This decision exposed the government inside and outside the country. We contacted the Arab League and the United Nations and informed them of what had happened. We did not contact them to complain, but to explain the truth. The rejection is a proof for the two organizations that the elections are faked.

[Al-Tawil] Why have you been boycotting the National Covenant meeting for nearly a month?

[Ben Mohamed] The National Covenant is separate from the coordination meetings held among its parties. We have informed the parties to the covenant that we are committed to the decision to object, while they insist on boycott. We are all fighting the elections, each in his own way. They are boycotting and we are opposing. It is a tactical disagreement. At any rate, we are not the only party not attending the covenant meetings. Other parties are not attending the meetings, but nothing is said about them.

Elections Commission Receives 97 Complaints

LD1110091995 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The independent national commission for monitoring the presidential elections said that it has received 97 complaints from sides involved in the elections, and that it has informed the concerned quarters of these complaints in order to take the suitable measures.

In a statement published yesterday, the commission stressed that it has received specific reports from the regional commissions, and that it has also received numerous complaints and protests from parties, candidates, and citizens since the commissions started their work.

According to the commission's report, these complaints were connected with administrative, security and information aspects.

The report stressed the commission's independence which it derived from the nature of its formation which included the parties participating in the dialogue, national figures and organizations, and representatives of the presidential candidates.

Candidates To Feature in Radio Phone-In Programs

LD1110130795 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The national radio will give the opportunity to the citizens to hold a dialogue with the personalities standing in the presidential elections on Thursday [12 October], Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, from 1320 to 1400. The program will host Mahfoud Nahnah on Thursday, Noureddine Boukrouh on Saturday, Said Sadi on Sunday, and Redha Malek on Monday.

The citizens who are interested in putting their questions to the candidates should contact the two following telephone numbers every day from 1400 to 1600 to register their calls: 691163 and 691219. You can also phone up directly during the transmission of the program.

Security Forces Arrest Former Minister's Killers

LD1110201395 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Late news: a statement released by the security services said that, after a large-scale search operation following the assassination of Mr. Boubaker Belkaid, a former minister and liberation war veteran, last 28 September, the security forces have arrested two terrorists. After investigation, their direct participation in the act of terrorism became clear. The two terrorists are Kettab Mohamed Amin and Farradi Abdelkrim. They had been commissioned by Bouhmoum Mohamed Alias Mouh Jatta to monitor the movements of the victim. According to the confessions of the two terrorists, they had monitored the movements of the victim for four days, who used to visit the

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place where he was killed at the same time. They have also admitted that on the day of the criminal act, they went to the place of the assassination, Port Said square in Algiers, together with a man called Abersi Yasine and their boss Mouh Jetta and individuals called Sebaa Hassen and Bourehla Abdelkader alias Abdelkader Kalatous. They then were all joined by three terrorists, including a man called Abderrazak alias Rouji. At about 1230, the man called Abderrazak followed the victim and fired several shots on him. This was on 28 September last. The perpetrators of this assassination are now being investigated by the security forces.

Agreements Signed on Rescheduling Foreign Debts

LD1110194995 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Algeria has signed four bilateral agreements on rescheduling its foreign debts with Holland, Belgium, Finland, and Denmark, said a statement issued by Bank of Algeria today. The signing of the agreements comes within the framework of the Paris Club agreement signed last July 1995 and represents the first stage of a series of agreements Algeria will signed with its 17 creditors. Negotiations with Paris Club were carried out amid good atmosphere and resulted in the rescheduling of approximately $7 billion, which would cover the financing of the extended grace periods [marhalat al-tashilat al-mouassa'] [passage omitted]

Egypt

U.S. Tightens Security After Shaykh Conviction

NC1110154195 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 4 Oct 95 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] Tight security measures have been imposed to protect U.S. facilities and houses of the U.S. Embassy staff in Cairo and other major cities. This followed a U.S. jury's conviction on 1 October of 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, mufti of al-Jihad and leader of the Islamic Group.

Security officials rejected a U.S. proposal that U.S. security personnel guard the entrances of and the streets around the U.S. Embassy and some other U.S. facilities. The proposal was made during a meeting with Cairo security officials. It was agreed that U.S. security personnel will guard the facilities from the inside only, and the Interior Ministry's security force will take charge of security on the streets. U.S. Embassy officials asked to be provided with information about any terrorist movements targeting their interests.

The security task was assigned to some 100 officers and soldiers from the Special Guards forces; they will guard about 12 U.S. facilities. There were reports that U.S. security reinforcements will arrive in Cairo within days at the request of the U.S. Embassy.

U.S. Embassy Revamps Surveillance

NC1110121795 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 9 Oct 95 p 5

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. Embassy in Cairo has revamped its security and surveillance in anticipation of any reaction to the conviction of Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman by a U.S. court.

The Embassy installed camera monitors and ultrasensitive surveillance devices to detect any unusual movement in the streets near Embassy buildings. These devices can even monitor traffic in al-Tahrir Square.

Defense Minister To Leave for U.S., Warns Sudan

NC1210064095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2130 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Oct [MENA]—Field Marshal Muhammad Husayn Tantawi, commander in chief of the armed forces and minister of defense and war production, has stated that he will leave for Washington in the next few days on an official working visit to the United States. He said he will meet with U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry to follow up on the results of the activities of the military coordination committee between the two countries and to implement its recommendations to promote the status and size of Egyptian-U.S. military relations in line with the requirements of the new stage to promote stability and the common national goals of both countries. In a statement to AL-AHRAM WEEKLY to be published on 12 October, Tantawi said both countries are examining promoting the production of an M1A1 tank plant and the possibility of exporting tanks to other countries under the new world order. He stressed that the plant can repair this tank and the M1A2 tanks, which is in service in some countries in the region.

Tantawi denied the Sudanese regime's claims about the existence of quality and sizable forces on the southern borders at parallel 22. He warned the Sudanese regime against attempting any provocations counter to Egypt's national interests or threatening its national security, because this would further endanger the situation. He pointed out that there are red lines of which the Sudanese regime is fully aware. Should it cross these lines, it would have to bear the consequences, particularly regarding water and territory.

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Tantawi expressed Egypt's readiness to consider augmenting the Egyptian peace-keeping force in Bosnia, if necessary, out of Egypt's commitment to the issues of peace and affirmation of its role within the framework of the Islamic Working Group. He noted that Egypt participated in the meetings of this group in Malaysia on 14 and 15 September. He also stressed that Egypt welcomes participation in the UN peace-keeping forces in any part of the world provided that the United Nations will guarantee through its special channels the security and safety of these forces and the parties to the conflict agree on Egypt's participation in peace-keeping forces.

Musa Says No Date Set for Meeting With al-Qadhdhafi

NC1110183895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1615 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Oct (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has underlined the need to solve the problem of the Palestinians on the Egyptian and Libyan borders. He added: This is what we are trying to do at the moment and the problem will be solved soon.

Asked about reports that Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, will visit Cairo next week, Musa pointed out in remarks today that so far there is no specific date for the visit. However, he added, Egypt welcomes Colonel al-Qadhdhafi at any time to consolidate consultations between the countries regarding issues of mutual interest.

Asked about the obstacles that Israel is creating to the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli Taba agreement recently signed in Washington, Musa noted that Egypt is following the situation with interest, because the agreement and the credibility of the entire peace process depend on the honest implementation of the agreement. He added: It is not a matter of agreements as much as it is a question of implementing these agreements, and this is what counts.

On Egypt's participation in the economic summit to be held in Amman on 29 October, Musa said Egypt is interested in the success of this conference, particularly in relation to the need to define the framework of future cooperation and how to preserve Arab interests. He noted that Egypt's delegation to the conference will include government representatives and businessmen and that coordination between the two sides over the issues to be discussed at the conference is now under way. A booklet outlining the Egyptian projects has been prepared, he added.

Asked about U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's upcoming visit to the region, Musa said Christopher will come to the region to attend the Amman conference, and he may make a regional tour at that time.

Regarding Syria's refusal to take part in the Amman conference, Musa said Syria's stand is being taken into consideration, adding that Egypt appreciates Syria's concerns in this regard.

Turning to the joint meeting between the Islamic and International Contact Groups on Bosnia, which was scheduled to be held in Rabat tomorrow, Musa said the meeting has been postponed until November for lack of time. The foreign minister noted that the cease-fire decision in Bosnia is still the subject of contacts among the parties to the Bosnian conflict. He noted that the matter requires insistence on the main points of the settlement, respecting the implementation of the peace agreement, preserving Bosnia's territorial integrity, and the coexistence of all parties, provided the needs of each party are taken into consideration and if these needs conform to the basic points of the agreement.

Regarding the Nonaligned conference to be held in Cartagena, Colombia, Musa said the conference will discuss ways to promote the Nonaligned Movement and ensure its continuity and effectiveness. He noted that he will leave Cairo on 14 October to lead Egypt's delegation to the conference. He added that the UN's future and ways to reform it, the economic and social issues in the Third World, the situation in Africa and in the Nonaligned countries, the peace process, and the situation in Bosnia will also be discussed at the conference.

Al-Qadhdhafi's Visit, Deportees Crisis Discussed

NC1110220395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2135 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Oct (MENA)—The AL-AHRAM newspaper expresses hope that the talks brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi will hold during his upcoming visit to Egypt will succeed in working out a solution to the crisis of the Palestinian deportees stranded on the Egyptian-Libyan border in a way that will preserve the Palestinians' dignity and enable their leaders to devote their efforts to the tough diplomatic battle with the Israeli occupation authorities. In an editorial in its 12 October issue, the paper says Egypt's role in seeking a way out of this crisis is consistent with its pioneering Arab role and sense of pan-Arab responsibilities. The paper says Egypt has always been the most understanding of the Palestinian stance after the Palestinian issue became a victim of inter-Arab differences, Israeli intransigence, and international pressure that aimed to end the problem in any way.

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Muslim Brotherhood Deputy Guide Gives Interview

MM1210092595 London FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH in Arabic Oct 95 pp 27-28

[Interview with Mustafa Mashhur, "first deputy general guide" of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, by unidentified correspondent in Cairo; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] The government escalation against the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt has intensified. And the situation has developed to the point of creating a serious precedent, the first such instance since 1965, as some Muslim Brotherhood members have been referred to the military court. In the light of this, will the Muslim Brotherhood change the policy it has been pursuing for decades?

[Mashhur] The Muslim Brotherhood is pursuing a policy based on principled foundations. They promote the word of Almighty God. They are aware that the road of the call [al-da'wah] is not covered with flowers. Besides, their aim is to seek the satisfaction of Almighty God and to perform the duties of the call. They focus on the saying of the Prophet, peace be upon him: "What is for God should continue, and what is for anyone other than God should cease." Those who are working to spread love and good among people, to unite ranks on the foundations of brotherhood promoted by Islam, and to establish the principles of justice and fairness are committed to these principles just as they are committed to these values.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] How do you explain the repeated arrest of Brotherhood members recently, especially popular members?

[Mashhur] We have suffered injustice for a long time. This is well known and nobody can deny it. Arrests have increased in the past few years. And precautionary detentions have continued despite the fact that the detainees are innocent, otherwise why have they not been referred to the court? Because of the fear that they might be acquitted, so that the regime would have no excuse to exercise its oppression.

We believe that the arrests are aimed at preventing Brotherhood members from entering the elections to be held to elect a new People's Assembly in November. Thus the arrests began early in 1995, the year of the elections for both the Consultative Council and the People's Assembly, and also at the professional unions level.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] What will be the group's position if the military court passes sentences on Brotherhood members?

[Mashhur] It will not be the first time the authorities have passed sentences on Muslim Brotherhood members in Egypt. And because Muslim Brotherhood members are not after personal interests, since they promote the word of Almighty God, seeking nothing but His reward, no sentences have managed to prevent the Muslim Brotherhood from pursuing the call and reaching the hearts of the faithful, promoting the ties of love and brotherhood. They are referring the matter to Almighty God, full of belief, confidence, and assurance.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] What impact will the recent arrest campaigns and the referral of some leaders to the military court have on the elections? Will this result in limiting the candidacies to certain constituencies?

[Mashhur] The Muslim Brotherhood has a popular presence on all stages and in all sectors. Its members enjoy the masses' love and confidence, because they are known for their work and self-denial and for their efforts to work for the good of the people. As the elections will be based on the individual system, every one of the Brothers is entitled to announce his candidacy for any position. We would like the elections to be held in an honest and neutral manner so that individuals would be referred to an ordinary [non-military] judge. Then we would be the first to accept their verdict.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] A considerable number of writers, politicians, and public figures from various political and intellectual tendencies have commented on the referral decision, stressing that it is clear injustice against Muslim Brotherhood members and that it violates the simplest rules of justice. In your view, what is the significance of this position?

[Mashhur] The Muslim Brotherhood is a group of Muslims urging people to return to their true Islamic system, which provides for freedom, security, dignity, progress, and knowledge. The method adopted in their call is good preaching. They make their mark everywhere. They are keen to work for good, love, sacrifice, and giving. Thus the attempts — by arresting them then referring them to the prosecutor's office and the military court — to prevent them from entering the elections to be held to elect members of the new People's Assembly represent clear injustice and a violation of the simplest rules of justice and citizenship rights. The denunciation of this government measure by parties, organizations, unions, and public figures is in itself a strong proof that the government policy is wrong, that it is not working for public welfare, but is violating the Constitution and encroaching on the rights of honorable citizens.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] Would you agree to the group's role being reduced and limited to the social framework in return for the release of the detained

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Brothers? And would you agree not to enter the next elections in return for a suspension of the referral decision?

[Mashhur] Islam, as revealed to God's messenger, peace be upon him, is a law and a way of life. Those promoting the word of God are committed to following this road. Power is not their aim, but, rather, fulfilling their duty and seeking the reward of Almighty God.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] The group's official spokesman expressed his wish to meet with the president to discuss aspects of the case. In this context, would the group backtrack on some of its constants? And what are the common denominators on which you would agree with the state?

[Mashhur] As it is a matter of constants, it is wrong to backtrack on constants. What the group's official spokesman meant was to stress the group's desire for dialogue as a civilized method based on argument and logic and aimed at upholding right.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] What is your opinion of the alliance with the Labor Party, now that it has been announced that the elections will be held on the basis of the individual system? Is there any coordination with the other parties such as the Wafd Party and the Nasirite Party?

[Mashhur] The Islamic alliance is not linked to the elections. It is an alliance within the framework of aims and objectives associated with applying the Shari'ah of Almighty God and Islamic tenets. We will not hesitate to follow any road we believe is in Egypt's interests.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] What is the Muslim Brotherhood's opinion of the POW's issue raised between Egypt and Israel recently?

[Mashhur] The Muslim Brothers have their history of jihad on Palestine's territory. Their view of its cause proceeds from principles emphasized by Islam. So not a single inch of the Muslims' land can be abandoned, no homes can be conceded, and there can be no forgiveness when it comes to rape, bloodshed, and usurpation of land. Muslims and Muslims' capabilities must be mobilized to liberate Palestine.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] A bulletin entitled AL-I'TISAM, issued by the information office of the Islamic League of Those Applying the Book and the Sunnah, urged the Muslim Brothers to abandon their peaceful line and to confront the regime, especially as the regime does not differentiate between dealing with the Muslim Brotherhood and those belonging to the Islamic Group and the Jihad group.

[Mashhur] The Muslim Brotherhood is pursuing a line derived from God's Book and the Sunnah of His messenger, peace be upon him. It is not their own line. Nor does it have anything to do with the regime's opinion or policy.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] Does the new government escalation against the Muslim Brotherhood warn of new predicaments like the 1954 and 1956 incidents, or is this escalation going to subside after the elections?

[Mashhur] God knows what will happen as regards this escalation tomorrow or the day after. However, those promoting the word of God take account of all possibilities. Past experiences provide lessons for everyone.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] The regime insists that the Muslim Brotherhood does not exist legally. The Muslim Brotherhood has on several occasions stressed that the group exists and no decision has been issued to dissolve it. And there is a lawsuit before the State Council. How do you explain this delay in deciding on this lawsuit? And why does not the group mobilize all its energies to reactivate this case legally?

[Mashhur] The Muslim Brothers exerted and are exerting every effort to reactivate this case, thus confirming their adoption of the methods of dialogue and recourse to the laws. They are confident that they will have their place in people's hearts throughout Egypt...faithful Egypt, whose faith is deep- rooted...Egypt which has a long history of jihad and a great cultural role.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] Imposing security around the professional unions run by Islamists is a new policy pursued by the Egyptian regime as a means to destroy the democratic margin provided. To what extent do you believe the government has succeeded in this connection?

[Mashhur] It is a method of escaping from the correct confrontation. As is known, the unions' elections are the most honest elections Egypt has ever known. No rigging, nor falsification. They are the cleanest and most accurate method through which the people expressed their opinion through the unionists, who represent the most important educated, cultured, and specialist sector in Egypt. Anything that relies on taking away people's right to express their views and choose their representatives cannot succeed or continue forever.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] How do you explain the huge popularity the Muslim Brotherhood enjoys among the various groups of the people? Is this popularity one of the reasons behind the government campaign against the group?

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[Mashhur] No one denies the response of numerous groups of the people with the Muslim Brotherhood in the institutions in which they exist, be it unionist, university teaching clubs, local councils, student unions, and so on. It is natural, because by nature the Egyptian people are religious people, and the Muslim Brotherhood promotes Islam in a moderate manner and through good preaching, without extremism or deviation. The people sensed this through the services offered by the establishments in which the Muslim Brothers work. They sensed sincerity, honesty, and care for the interests of other citizens, "Muslims and Copts." As a result, the government's men were alarmed, hence they launched campaigns of harassment, restriction, defamation, and accusation. But all this did not affect the public's confidence in the Muslim Brotherhood. So the regime passed suspect laws in addition to the ill-reputed law in force, first and foremost the emergency law. It passed the unions law No. 100, which failed and was amended. This is in addition to the terrorism law and the law on the appointment of faculty deans and the removal of religious people from teaching staff and education colleges. Then the Muslim Brotherhood was accused of supporting terrorism — which is a false and baseless accusation. The proof of this is the fact that not a single Brother has taken part in any incident of violence. The Muslim Brotherhood was first accused of being an illegal group — a false accusation. There is no law that prevents the Brotherhood's activities. We had hoped that a single Brother would appear before a normal judge so that this accusation could be refuted and proved null and void.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] Who do you believe is behind the escalation against the Brotherhood? And could they achieve anything?

[Mashhur] The escalation is conducted by those who make laws to measure, with a view to protecting the regime. However, they are actually doing the opposite. The press law provoked strong reactions among all groups and parties, and the tide of its condemnation and rejection is still continuing strongly. Then came the decision to refer the Brothers to military courts. It too was rejected and condemned, and all groups and parties demanded that it be revoked. Regrettably, the regime paid no attention to these feelings and views, and it referred the Brothers to military courts. It is clear that the motive is to prevent them from running in the People's Assembly elections, even though the prime minister's statements deny this.

It is to do with clinging to the seat of power and the [regime's] rejection of any means leading to a change. Almighty God verily says the truth: "Lord of power, thou givest power to whom thou pleasest, and thou strippest power from whom thou pleasest." [Koranic verse] So power is taken away from those who cling to it, seeking nothing but trivial, transient, and worldly gains.

Shaykh Comments on POW Killings by Israelis

NC1210103795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1000 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 12 Oct (MENA)—His Eminence the Grand Imam of al-Azhar Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq has said that the killing of the Egyptian POW's in the 1956 and 1967 wars was a deliberate murder that necessitates punishment. He underlined that the murderers must be tried as war criminals.

In an interview with AL-WAFD published today, Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq said: Egypt took POW's and treated them kindly, just as Muslims have always done, he said, adding that Islam observes the ethics of war. It was Islam which established the ethics of war, prohibiting the killing of women, the destruction of populated places, or the burning of fields, he said.

What Israel did to our POW's was unprecedented; no one ever did that, Shaykh Jad-al-Hazqq said, stressing the need to prepare the necessary files for the case and to take resolute and speedy action to determine those victims' rights and get them.

The grand imam was asked whether peace makes it incumbent on us to accept Israel's whims and shortcomings and close our eyes to its crimes. He replied: We do not want to jump over reality into theories. Israel is a reality with which we have to live. But we also have to respect ourselves, our status, our history, and our nation.

His eminence added: This is what we should strive to preserve. However, our respect for reality should not make us fuse in it and relinquish our rights and dignity, because we come from a nation that represents a fifth of the world population and we have an ancient and deep-rooted history in this region. We are neither newcomers to nor occupiers of the lands of others, he said.

Libya

Citizens Said Ready To Help Palestinian Brothers

LD1210093595 Tripoli JANA in English 0811 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, Al-Tumur [October] 12, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY — AL-SHAMS newspaper asserted that the Arab people of Libya were ready to help their Palestinian brothers to re-organize

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their ranks and build their institutions which may guarantee their return to their homeland with dignity and honour despite those who sold them cheap.

In an editorial published yesterday, the paper stressed that Palestine was the eternal land of the Palestinian people and that the Palestinian people will not accept any alternative to their last man. The paper added that this stance of the Palestinian people frightened the politicians who bow their head in submission and capitulation.

AL-SHAMS newspaper stressed "The Great Jamahiriyah should not cooperate with those who capitulated and connived with the Israeli enemy and as long as they consider the Palestinians as expelled from Libya and not driven out of Palestine. This campaign is being waged by reactionary Arab and mercenary media which joined in an intensive campaign against the Arab people in Libya in a bid to distort the truth and falsify the reality.

The paper said this campaign was feeding lies and disinformation in an attempt to mislead the public opinion everywhere.

The paper pointed out that the media are using the same method and style as that they used in the so-called Lockerbie issue and in the same spirit of solidarity with Western imperialism and the American occupation of the Arab homeland and with the Jewish settlement and in the same hostile spirit vis-a-vis Arab and Islam and for the same non-political objective: hostility towards the aspirations, rights, and objectives of the Arab nation.

These mass media have persisted in spreading blatant lies and falsification in solidarity and alliance with the enemy by leaking the dicta of capitulation.

The paper said "Despite all these, they are shamelessly urging the Jamahiriyah to cooperate with them to settle the problem of the Palestinians who were removed from Libya and perhaps they are doing that stupidly and out of lack of decency. Thus, the people's administration in Libya should not cooperate with these drives and lies which amount to betrayal. Libya is not the land of the Palestinian people... Palestine is the eternal land of the Palestinian people...

Sudan

Akol Views Impact of Splits Within SPLM

MM1110121495 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 8 Oct 95 p 7

[Interview with Dr. Lam Akol, leader of the SPLM—United Organization, by Nizar Daw-al-Na'im in London; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Daw-al-Na'im] Your enemies accuse you of being the reason behind all the splits in the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement [SPLM]. What are your comments?

[Akol] We must clarify what is meant by splits. The August 1991 al-Nasir declaration was the outcome of natural factors inside the movement. If Lam Akol had not announced the declaration, some other member of the movement would have done it, because the situation within had reached the stage where there was no alternative but to bring about a change, the way it happened. The reason for the declaration was that the political leadership had become paralyzed and there was no longer any room for discussion within the movement. Therefore, I was not responsible for the split in 1991. The second change in connection with which I am mentioned occurred in February 1994. It is not true that this time I refused to work under Dr. Riek Machar's leadership and both he and we refused to work under Colonel John Garang's orders. What happened was that he expelled me from the movement. This is impossible in a voluntary armed movement. That is why I decided to continue the struggle without him; I was not the cause of the split. This is an unfounded accusation which would be leveled only by someone who is biased or ignorant of the truth.

[Daw-al-Na'im] How are relations within the Machar movement now?

[Akol] The only person in the movement's leadership who stood by me was Peter 'Abd-al-Rahman Sali [name as transliterated]. The major groups which broke away after that abandoned Machar because they were convinced that his policies were dictatorial and that he was a dwarf among giants, and therefore they did not trust his leadership of the movement. There was a great deterioration in the Machar wing because he abandoned all democratic ways to solve problems. Only a small number have remained with him now. That is why he changed his movement's name to South Sudan Liberation Movement [SSLM] hoping to cause a media sensation.

[Daw-al-Na'im] What did the southerners gain from the splits? Do you not agree with the view that the biggest

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defeat for the southern movement was caused by the splits?

[Akol] This depends on which time frame you mean. In the long term, I believe that what happened after the al-Nasir declaration was a positive political result, despite the human and material losses. We had a movement which seemed militarily strong but lacked political direction and had no peace plan. In contrast, you will now find us talking about a consensus among southerners on self-determination, thanks to the al-Nasir declaration. Prior to that, we were leading the movement's delegations at the negotiations with the government and would talk only about pre-agreed terms to enter a dialogue, concentrating on repealing the September 1983 laws and the defense agreements (with Arab countries) and the lifting of the state of emergency. Even the dialogue with Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi in 1986 concentrated on the terms, but the content and what we wanted were issues that were not dealt with. The current exchange of accusations on ways to solve the problem is a democratic climate that did not exist even among senior leaders. That is why I consider the al-Nasir declaration a declaration for democracy in the movement. What is required now is to rally the ranks and work together to achieve our goal and continue the open dialogue. We must point out here that Garang himself, due to the pressures caused by political support for the al-Nasir declaration, had to accept the southerners' move toward self-determination. The reason for the setback is that whoever assumed the leadership (of the al-Nasir wing) had become a dictator who had lost sight of the overall picture and did not rise to the level of the responsibility. What happened after that was splits within the SSLM group whereas the splits had stopped within the Garang movement since 1992. This gave Garang some credibility which he used to prove that Garang was capable of looking after the interests of the movement better than those who brought reforms. This was a setback, but a short-lived one because many saw Machar's failure and learned from his mistakes.

[Daw-al-Na'im] What did you do to solve the problem between the southerners?

[Akol] We have made efforts to rally the ranks. When Machar became aware of his isolation, he went back to playing the tribal tune and that is why there was talk about the tribal aspect of the movements. This is the most serious setback in the reform movement and the southern movement as a whole. This problem is on its way to being solved, because people are especially aware that the opportunities for the southerners uniting are greater in the long term. Only two people now stand in the way of unity, namely Machar and Garang, because they are after the leadership. Machar is inciting talk about parallel movements to preserve his position against Garang and in this way he is stirring up tribalism. Garang's view of the issue is also limited because unity for him means other people surrendering and joining the ranks under his leadership. Unity for him is unity between the lion and the lamb which is also unacceptable to the southerners. The government is watching the splits and entertaining dreams of a military victory. Perhaps some men from the people's army have surrendered under what it terms the internal solution. This is a failed plan and the best proof of that is what happened with William Noun [who joined the government and later defected again].

[Daw-al-Na'im] Surely, the recent splits are among the reasons behind the rebel movement's loss of most of the territories which were under its control to the government?

[Akol] What happened inside the movement was unknown and there was a misunderstanding of the nature of the struggle. There are advances and retreats in guerrilla warfare, but what is important, however, is the development of ideas. The control of cities does not mean that you will not lose them, and the best example is the Eritrean Liberation Movement which advanced and retreated then returned to control all Eritrean territories. The lesson from that is that the most important thing for the movement is to continue to gain support from the rural areas. What happened with regard to our movement was that we took over cities but we did not have the citizens' support. Before the split, the areas under our control were isolated garrisons, because control was not accompanied by political action to gain support. When the turn of the government came, it regained the areas but still did not gain the support. The talk about splits being the cause is untrue, because the areas were only militarily under our control.

We are now trying to gain support in our areas and we have been frank in our talk with the citizens. Diligent political action is what gains the citizens' support for the leadership. We are working slowly in the eyes of some but we are on the right track.

[Daw-al-Na'im] How do you defend the areas under your control against the southern sides and the government? What are your armament sources?

[Akol] Our weapons are old. We are dealing politically with the issue by signing peaceful coexistence agreements with local leaders of the Garang movement. Even when these leaders were ordered by Garang to attack us, they did not obey, because they were aware of the benefit gained from their agreement with us about not using the area to settle disputes.

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[Daw-al-Na'im] There are persistent rumors that you have signed agreements with the government, and Khartoum announced recently that you have signed an agreement with the governor of Mashuda [as transliterated]. What is the content of this agreement?

[Akol] We have not heard of any agreement; if anyone has a copy of it let him produce it. I left the front two months ago, so how could I have signed an agreement in the south during that period? This is an allegation by the government, because it is trying to divert attention from its isolation caused by its extremist fundamentalist orientations.

Tunisia

Effects of Drought on Foreign Trade Viewed

95AF0177A Tunis REALITES in French 31 Aug 95 p 19

[Unattributed article: "The Effects of the Drought"]

[FBIS Translated Text]

Foreign Trade

At the end of the first seven months of 1995, Tunisia's foreign business exchanges reached 3,023.3 million dinars in exports and 4,350.6 million dinars in imports, resulting in a 69.5 percent import coverage.

In relation to the level of trade for the first seven months of last year, exports increased by 15.2 percent whereas imports rose 13.6 percent, which yielded a one-point improvement in the import coverage.

The increase in exports comes notably in consumer goods (+20.3 percent) and capital goods (+15.2 percent) while basic foodstuffs recorded the lowest rate (+5.2 percent) and this was a result of the drought. (We should remind our readers that exports of food products increased during the same period last year by 30.8 percent).

As for the increase in imports, it can be ascribed to basic foodstuffs, which rose 133 million dinars, i.e. 53.7 percent, following the import of large quantities of wheat to compensate for the decrease in local production.

The increase in imports also came from mining and phosphates products (+24 percent) and intermediate products (+16.9 percent).

The only group whose imports recorded a decrease is capital goods (-1.6 percent).

Prices

This past July, the family consumer price index recorded an 0.8 percent increase over June. This increase is due to food products (+1.5 percent) and clothing (+0.6 percent), whereas the increase in the indexes for other groups except transportation varied between 0.1 and 0.3 percent.

Furthermore, the average monthly index for the first seven months of 1995 rose 6.1 percent in relation to the same period in 1994 and this occurred in the wake of the increase for the indexes for food (+8.2 percent), clothing (+6.7 percent), leisure and culture (+6 percent), health and beauty care (+5.2 percent), and housing (+4.5 percent).

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Kuwait

Prime Minister Holds News Conference

LD1110054995 Kuwait KSC Television in Arabic 1835 GMT 9 Oct 95

[News conference by Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister, with unidentified correspondents on 9 October; place not given — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [al-Sabah] Welcome to you all. In the name of God; thanks be to God; there is only one God. Sisters and brothers, I am very pleased to begin by welcoming you all to this meeting, which I wanted to have with you this morning to talk to you about all issues, topics, matters. I will also listen and reply to questions you might want to ask me.

Sisters and brothers, I will talk to you with the utmost frankness and, God willing, my statements will be clear, unambiguous, and unequivocal. I will start by saying that in the past few days there have been rumors and reports about the present and future of our beloved country. Some of us have gone as far as to spread and exaggerate the rumors, reports, and interpretations and raise subjects that are very remote from those I raised with the brothers at the diwaniyat [meetings held in people's homes to discuss national issues]. So much so that some exaggerated and wrote down things they had imagined and that were not even on my mind. I have been following and reading about these rumors and reports. I am used to, as they say, reading between the lines to discover the reason or reasons. I take this opportunity today to give you the reason or reasons clearly and frankly.

Some gave dimensions to my visits and came up with various interpretations, but let me tell you that I am in the habit, at this time every year, of returning the visits to my brothers in the diwaniyat who visit me throughout the year. I found it necessary to continue with this habit. At this time I visit my brothers in the diwaniyat and tell them: Thank you for your visits to me. This is one. Second, I tell them: It makes me happy, as prime minister, to live with you and understand the problems of the homeland and the problems of the citizens. It also makes me very happy to listen to your suggestions and ideas, which help me and other members of the government to manage policies, be they domestic or foreign.

I used to read what had been written and would read what may be written, but it does not influence me. I will not change my habit that I was accustomed to follow, namely pay back visits and meet with the brothers who hold meetings at their homes. [passage omitted]

In this country we live in a small society whose slogans are always: Amity, brotherhood, common understanding, solidarity and serve our motherland Kuwait for the sake of defending it in all fields. I would, however, say that these are good traditions, and we endeavor to keep them and adhere to them. I mean the customs of the visits and meetings with brother citizens to talk to them [word indistinct] and listen to their suggestions and views without any sensitivity.

But to interpret what I say out of context. I would like to speak frankly. They said that these [remarks] were in connection with fact-finding.

Some have said that these [visits] are in connection with the fact-finding report. Others have also said that these visits and the issues debated in the diwaniyat are related to the new law on debts. [Words indistinct] to tell you the truth, I have not given any importance to this kind of talk, rumors, or what has been written in the local newspapers, because I personally know that this kind of exaggeration is possible at times. [passage omitted]

During these visits, I said very frankly, clearly, and truthfully, out of my duty as a prime minister .... [pauses] All I said during these diwaniyat and visits was to appeal to my brother citizens, in view of the Iraqi developments whose dimensions I know, and with regard to the current and future circumstances, to be more vigilant, alert, attentive, and cooperative in all fields so that we do not give the opportunity to the Iraq destroyer [haddam] to choose his time to invade us by surprise.

We have learned lessons from the Iraqi aggression that took place on the morning of Thursday, 2 August 1990. We should work day and night as brothers not to provide the enemy with the opportunity to carry out its hostile aims and expansionist ambitions. I am talking about closing ranks. I have in the past spoken about this, and I am speaking about this now and will do so in the future to explain these slogans and aims to ensure the security of the homeland and the citizens. As an official I appreciate how grave are the responsibilities placed on me. I appreciate too the trust I carry and that is carried also by my brothers, the members of government. We know full well the duties and responsibilities placed on us.

In whose interest is the method of whispering and the writing of articles that harm and are of no benefit? If there are significant issues that are of interest to the homeland and the citizens, then we are totally prepared to discuss these issues and reach an understanding on finding the solution or solutions in the interest of Kuwait and its faithful people. I would like, brothers, to talk to you at length, because there are many issues we all, as

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sons of this country, should discuss and debate: this or that policy relating to security and military affairs, the step or steps or the strategy we agree on, and getting competent authorities to implement these policies and strategy. When I talk to my brother citizens at their private gatherings, I do not overlook the role of the constitutional institutions. I know as a matter of fact that finding the solution or solutions will be the mechanism — either a law or by-law or decision. [passage omitted]

The main issue and the priority issue is to maintain the entity of the country. I did not say that other issues are not to be discussed. As an official I said in fact and I will always say that the number one issue we ought to give our interest is the protection of the country, the protection of the citizens, from any aggression. This can only be achieved, brothers, through the discharging of responsibilities and through feeling that the current circumstances require from us all more vigilance, cooperation, and cohesion on the internal front. [passage omitted]

Brothers and sisters, I know you have many questions you want to ask me and you have many queries that you want to be answered at this fraternal and amiable meeting. I will be happy to reply to all these questions with total clarity and frankness.

I want to conclude this short address at this good gathering by praying to Almighty God to keep our mother, Kuwait, more stable and prosperous and secure. Thanks, sisters and brothers, for having listened to me.

[AL-ANBA correspondent] [passage omitted on stateless citizens, housing, and unemployment]

[Al-Sabah] My government took numerous decisions in the last few years. Otherwise, how can we run the affairs of the state? No, there were numerous decisions.

[AL-ANBA correspondent] Your Highness, I mean the more important decisions that concern citizens whose preoccupations you personally share.

[Al-Sabah] Thank you for raising such issues. First, be certain, and also hope our brothers who are here with us to be certain, that these subjects are being looked at by the government. They are also being studied by the specialized committees. [passage omitted]

Concerning the stateless citizens issue, I would like to answer it briefly, because this subject is considered one of the important subjects that relate to the security of the homeland and citizens. Therefore, I do not want to talk about this matter in detail, but I would say that the government had made the first stride or the second stride to find a solution to this problem in as much as the government is concerned in finding a solution. I sensed from many of our brother members of the National Assembly that they share with the government its concern, and they are studying what the government has arrived at. I will not be divulging a secret if I say that this matter will be discussed with our brother members of the National Assembly to listen to what views and ideas they have to help us reach a solution to the problem or what you called "Bidoun" [stateless national]. It is a problem that us as government and as a National Assembly calls on us to do more study and more exchange of opinion for the sake of arriving at a clear and frank solution to the problem of these people.

As regards the second part of your question on housing, I can say that this issue is important and I know that this subject was discussed by the members of the National Assembly; and in our meetings with the members of the National Assembly we also played a part, as a government, in making numerous observations about the decisions and the laws. As for unemployment, you can write, and the brothers can also write, that the doors of the military institutions — in other words, the army, police, and national guard — will remain open to welcome Kuwait's youth to join and work in these military institutions to be trained in the use of weapons and in order for them to play a prominent role in the defense of our beloved Kuwait. I hope I have managed, with this answer, to reply to the points that have been made.

[Correspondent] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. First, Your Highness Prime Minister, we would like to thank you for this kind invitation, which reflects the deep-rooted democracy, freedom of opinion, and open dialogue with the first man in charge of the government. Second, I would like you to accept the difference of opinion that should not affect amity.

[Al-Sabah] Go ahead.

[Correspondent] Your Highness Prime Minister, you started by saying that there have been rumors and reports about the present and future of the country. This is where the disagreements begin because there have been no rumors, Your Highness. What happened was that there were comments made about statements attributed to you and published in the [Kuwaiti] newspaper AL-SIYASAH. If the journalists had not reported your statements, this would have meant that these statements were not given any consideration. In those statements, you said that the next few months will be the most dangerous in Kuwait's history. We all know that the most dangerous period in Kuwait's history was the invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the liberation of the country. Therefore, the interpretation could be that the most dangerous

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event was an invasion that was not followed by the liberation of the country [sentence as heard].

From this premise, journalists reported these statements, and there were those who supported them and those who opposed them and there were those criticized them and those who backed them. Furthermore, nothing came from the council of ministers or your highness to confirm that you made those statements; particularly as those statements were made in diwaniyat and these diwaniyat....

[Al-Sabah, interrupting] I am aware of that.

[Correspondent] The second thing, Your Highness Prime Minister, you are saying that you will not stop your visits to the diwaniyat, as if someone has asked you to stop them. On the contrary, this is a good custom, a custom we are used to in Kuwait, and we hope they will continue. However, the diwaniyat, Your Highness Prime Minister, do not have the power or the means to do anything. The natural thing to do would have been to invite the National Assembly to convene if the next few months were going to be the most dangerous in Kuwait's history. By inviting the National Assembly to convene we can consecrate national unity, democracy, solidarity, and cohesion. It has already happened that the government invited the National Assembly to convene for issues of lesser importance.

At the start of your statements, Your Highness Prime Minister, you did not tell us what the most dangerous months in Kuwait's history were going to be in the next few months. Can we know what imminent danger is facing us? Thank you.

[Al-Sabah] I do not know, Brother Muhammad, how you came up with the word: more dangerous. There is danger and there is more dangerous. I will not deny that I visited one of the diwaniyat and I will call it the diwaniyat of al-Ghanam. The talk was frankly about the Iraqi threat.

In this meeting — I do not want to elaborate because talking about this subject would be in the interest of the destroyer of Iraq. We receive such information from our own sources in the sisterly states and in the friendly states. We build our strategy in accordance with such reports that we get.

I visited the diwaniyat of al-Ghanam, and I do not deny that the main topic of discussion was Iraq. I told the journalists and everybody who was there on that night at that diwaniyat: Listen brothers, the threat exists and might increase. We should all be more aware of this threat. We should establish, officials and non-officials, further cooperation and adopt a united stand. I asked for further cooperation, and this is significant. I also asked for further vigilance, and this is significant. I also asked for further efforts to safeguard the country's security. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Your Highness, your words now are very assuring, but allow me to say that when you used to utter something and what you said was not refuted, you then could not blame the writers if they discussed that. Now you have removed the fears, but within the last two weeks no denial was issued; what has been atributed to you is serious relating to the country's future. When it is said that the coming months are more serious and those words are not refuted, then you cannot blame writers if they discuss that. Thank you.

[Al-Sabah] Has Sa'd al-'Abdallah got to the stage that makes him capable of defining a period of time, and defining it as being three months — 90 days; and after the 90 days what will happen? I have said and repeat here the following: As long as the Haddam of Iraq is in power, the danger exists, and not only to Kuwait. I have also told that to my brothers, the visitors from the Gulf states and other Arab states. As long as that man is head of the government, do not expect to see more stability and security; this does not only apply to Kuwait but to all the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] states. I have said that, and I am prepared to say it now and tomorrow and the day after. I must warn my brother citizens in the current circumstances. [passage omitted]. What is required of us as sons of Kuwait for which our fathers and forefathers sacrificed their lives and while we have this trust in our hands is that we should not provide Saddam Husayn with an opportunity to carry out another aggression similar to that of August 1990. I want the brother citizens who will be listening to this appeal to be most cautious and vigilant and to work — as I have said — day and night to thwart the danger from our dear Kuwait.

[AL-BALAGH correspondent] Your Highness, lately the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry has been trying to bridge the gap in the views between Kuwait and the states that supported the Iraqi aggression. What are your views on the resumption of relations with these states?

[Al-Sabah] My views were declared; they are not my views only but the views also of the head of state, His Highness the Amir, may God protect him. At the Amir's speech opening the National Assembly in 1993 and also at the opening of the Assembly in 1994 these views were expressed; we specified what was wanted. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] In the Name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. I am Sami [name indistinct] from "al-Anba". Two quick questions for your highness. First question: Everybody agrees on the danger coming from

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the north [Iraq]. The question is: When do people start having a role in repelling this danger? When will society start being militarized? When will the GCC countries, the Damascus Declaration countries and Western Alliance countries start having a more effective role? Citizens do not think that the presence of 1000 soldiers is enough. Iraq had taken 7000 Western hostages in the past. The quick question about the other thorny issue is that of the stateless people [bidun]. The existence of a single committee to deal with the stateless people will take between 20 to 25 years. Why do we not set up 20 or 25 committees to settle this issue in one year? To conclude: Kuwaiti citizens are wondering when things will be better between your highness and the National Assembly so that you will attend its sessions? Thank you.

[Al-Sabah] First I would like to answer the first part of your question in connection with what we have prepared for the Iraqi aggression. This is a good question and I thank you for putting it forward. This is at the heart of the government action in general and the military institutions in particular. However, part of this responsibility and duty should be shouldered by the citizens. We could not in the present or future circumstances act as mere viewers.

I do not deny the truth of the fact that there are defense agreements which we had signed with the permanent Security Council member countries. These countries, are in my opinion, fully prepared. [passage omitted] To tell you the truth, I would not like to talk any further about this issue because it is related to military matters and to the defense of this land. I hope, however, that you can understand the dimension of what I am saying with this brief answer.

The second question in connection with the stateless people [Bidun]. The problem is not to have one or four or 25 committees. What solution is there? What strategy? What vision do we have to settle this issue? I prefer to call it an issue rather than a problem. This is also in our minds. I said a few minutes ago that as far as the government members are concerned, we have discussed it and agreed on the aspired solution. However, we have also to wait and listen to the views of our brothers, the members of the National Assembly, because this issue is not only the concern of the government, it is an issue for all the constitutional institutions. We should take enough time to discuss it and exchange views and consultations in any matters related to the present and future interest of the homeland and the citizens. I believe that this issue should be referred to the National Assembly a few days after the beginning of its new session.

As for the third point which [pauses] My brothers the speaker and members of the National Assembly know the reason, or reasons. Yes, please.

[Correspondent] Thank you, Your Highness the Prime Minister. I might be deviating a little from the scope....

[Al-Sabah, interrupting] It is allowed, it is allowed.

[Correspondent] No, no, no, it is within the scope of what you have said. I am interested in an issue which preoccupies everyone, including your highness. It is an issue connected with the prisoners. I have questions about this side. It is seen over the past three or more years that whatever the government rejects, it accepts three years later.

[Al-Sabah] What it rejects?.

[Correspondent] What the government rejects, it accepts three years later. I have two cases of this. Two cases which we live with now. The first case is the principle of the direct meeting which is taking place now inside the Iraqi and Kuwaiti border. In the past, there used to be a principled stance which did not like such meetings. The second issue is connected with health, it is connected with (?welfare). Efforts are currently being exerted in this direction. This used to be rejected, but has been accepted now. I am not interested in knowing why it was rejected, and what we could now call acceptance. I am primarily interested in knowing whether there is a time schedule in place, which the prisoners' families precisely know that about, for achievements on these two points: negotiations, or the so-called (?welfare), or the so-called... [pauses] Because the people are suffering from this problem. If I could finish this issue, Your Highness, if I could finish this issue: the issue is: What is the mechanism in your mind? The mechanism in your mind is that the work of the national committee for prisoners' affairs be assessed. In your view, what are the results of the assessment of their work? I am not making an assessment on this. I am enquiring about this aspect, because the initial assessment indicates that there is an official effort for which it is thankful; there is positive work; there are official contacts; but there are other aspects of this issue which, with great regret, are absent, even at the international level, and I cannot go beyond that, even at the international level, there is no wide humanitarian effort. Amnesty International might have been there working on this aspect, but their role is absent. Your Highness, I would like primarily to say that we should look at the prisoners' issue because there is genuine suffering, there is a genuine problem. I hope to have a reply to these questions from you. Thank you.

[Al-Sabah] First, I begin by answering this question by saying that the issue of the prisoners has not only

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interested the families of the prisoners themselves; it is an issue which interests us all today and tomorrow and the day after; we shall not rest until we welcome our sons the prisoners. This is our duty and responsibility. We cannot evade the solution of this issue — neither today nor tomorrow. We are working day and night for the release of our sons who are now in the prisons of Iraq. I begin by saying to you why was there at the beginning a refusal and then that became a welcome after that. I was the one who made the decision of refusal. I invited 25 or 26 chairmen of committees who were following up the question of the prisoners in various ways. I rejected — in fact I would like to say opposed — the policy of the time. We did not beg; we shall not go down on our knees. Our sons are prisoners; there is a UN Security Council resolution — number 687 — which compels Iraq to end [the state of war] and carry out the demarcation of the frontier and release all the prisoners. We insist on it; we are in constant touch through the Red Cross and the other international organizations; our contacts with these international organizations will continue until this issue comes to an end. [passage omitted]

As for the meetings between the sides, this is something else. The meetings began in actual fact in Switzerland. For special circumstances relating to the non-Kuwaiti members of this committee, it was suggested that we should look for a place nearer than Switzerland. We proposed a number of states which would have been suitable for holding the meeting of the main committee. I do not want to reveal the identity of those states, but Iraq refused to visit or to hold meeting to discuss the issue of the prisoners in those states. After that decision was reached — on proposals from the members of the committee — and we said that Kuwait had no objection and did not want to complicate matters; we support any formula, method or way that would lead to cutting short the time taken for the release of our sons the prisoners.

Following Iraq's acceptance it was agreed that the main committee should meet in Switzerland. As for the technical committee its meeting should take place along the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border. [passage omitted] The venue is not the main issue but it is your right to ask me what are the results which have been so far achieved? Until now I regret to say — in fact I am pained to say — until now we have not heard a positive reply from the Iraqi side which attended the meetings. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] [Question indistinct]

[Al-Sabah] I am sorry for not having answered the third part of that question. I refer to your question about the evaluation. The issue is not to study reports and pass judgement on them; the issue is not how many meetings we hold or where we hold them. The main issue is the result achieved. With regard to the efforts which have been made and are being made by the chairman of the committee I want to say that you and I should express our thanks to them for the efforts being made in order to arrive at finding out the facts. The chairman of the committee and a group of committee members and some of the families of the prisoners paid visits to fraternal and friendly states; the latest visit was to India, Pakistan, and Australia. I can tell you that the talks which were held between the committee chairman and members on the one side and senior officials of the said states on the other were fruitful and positive. [passage omitted].

[Al-'Udwani] I am Mubarak al-'Udwani from "Al-Qabas" newspaper. A question to your highness on the future of Iraq. In fact, maybe Kuwait and Iran, specifically, are the countries most affected by the current Iraqi regime. There is, no doubt, as your highness knows and follows, a large movement in many neighboring capitals and the region's countries to shake things up in Iraq or create a new formula, (?regime) in Iraq. What is your reading of Iraq's future? How do you see it? How do you see our vision, as Kuwait, of Iraq's future?

[Al-Sabah] Almighty God is the only one who knows the future. But as an official I am obliged to follow the kind and size of Iraqi movements and in what field: political, media, economic, and military. We collect this information until the required picture is clear to us. But as an official my knowledge of Iraqi intentions and I say this in this gathering and let every Kuwaiti national hear this. I say yes, the aggressive intentions are still in the head of the president of Baghdad's ruling regime. His expansionist ambitions are still there. Even the plans are still there but the point is seizing the opportunities. He is watching and monitoring Gulf, Arab, regional, and international circumstances in order to know when the opportunity is favorable to him in order to implement the aggressive intentions he has been having. Therefore, when I implored all my fellow citizens out of a feeling of responsibility and my knowing that our strength lies in our cooperation, our close unity, and the unity of our word. Here lies our strength in addition to the support of the brothers and friendly countries which have now expressed their willingness to stop any Iraqi aggression against Kuwait. But it must be clear to everyone that there is an outstanding (?factor). But for Kuwait's security in the present and the future we are required to push back any aggression from any country.

With regard to the third part of your question, I can tell you in my capacity as an official shouldering the responsibility of what I have said and what I am saying and what I will be saying — the Iraqi aggression has

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not ended — it will not end in a month's time or three months' time or three years' time; we have to stand fast and we should abort Saddam's aggressive plans. If he moves in the economic sphere we should do likewise, and if he moves in the media sphere we should do likewise; this also applies to the political sphere; if he moves in the military field then he will find the people of Kuwait are prepared and ready to defend their country because they are prepared to die for the sake of Kuwait, and ready to cooperate with the fraternal and friendly states. Yes, you — let us have your question.

[Correspondent] I am Farhan [name indistinct], the chief editor of the magazine 'Arab'. In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate; what is your comment on what has been said recently by a Yemeni official; I mean his reaffirmation that Yemen should not apologize to Kuwait and his accusation of Kuwait of having interfered in the affairs of south Yemen? Thank you.

[Al-Sabah] The official you mentioned is a Yemeni; I read his statement, but before [Deputy Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ali] al-Iryani and others made statements they all know that the people of Kuwait stand fast and know that the strategy which we have drawn up — which we have declared at the National Assembly — and know that Kuwait was not prepared to retract before the implementation of the conditions or the strategy or this policy which Kuwait has drawn up. The aggression that took place on Kuwait with the support of — and I say this in a loud voice — those states cannot be forgotten by this small and peaceful people who stood by those states and supported them in the past. But we do not care about statements or utterances. We have declared our stance in the Amir's speech in 1993 and 1994, and we are still committed to the implementation of this strategy.

[Al-Jasim] I am Yusuf 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Jasim from "Program Six Over Six" [not further identified]. Your Highness, in his memoirs General Colin Powell said that Kuwait would be exposed to constant danger because it is small in area and because of being a neighbor of Iraq. Naturally this is a geographic issue. In such a reference what concerns one is the question of Kuwait's security at present and in future, as your highness said. Following the aggression on Kuwait in August 1990, we Kuwaitis were touched in the first place by the support we received from the Gulf countries — the support of our brothers from the Gulf and the allies. What is your highness's view and what is the Kuwaiti Government strategy with regard to the activation or raising the levels of cooperation between Kuwait and the GCC member-states — here can one speak about the confederation which we used to hear about some time ago and no longer we hear about these days? As Kuwaitis we feel that the bolstering of our relations with the Gulf states in a more effective formula will perhaps ensure for us a secured future not only vis-a-vis the current Iraqi regime but perhaps with regard to any regime that may entertain the idea of attacking Kuwait in future.

[Al-Sabah] A good question. We in Kuwait have many aspirations and ideas regarding the strengthening of the GCC for the sake of the present and the future of the peoples of this area; we believe that cooperation should be in all fields without having to talk about confederations or federations. I am with anyone who demands the bolstering of the cooperation in any form and in all spheres — military, security, education, media — so that one day we may realize this dream. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] [Passage indistinct]

[Al-Sabah] [passage omitted] Concerning the situation in Iraq in all domains, you are right to say that there are several views on whether the ruling regime in Baghdad should continue or not, and each state has its own view on this matter according to its own objectives and interests, to put it briefly. However, regarding the role of Kuwait, we have said more than once, and on more than one occasion inside and outside Kuwait, that what happened and is happening in Kuwait is the responsibility of the Iraqi people. We do not want to comment on reports that the Iraqi authorities have begun preparations for the elections to proclaim allegiance to Saddam on 15 October. We are going to hear the opinion of the Iraqi people. It is not up to me to say that this is right or wrong. We do not interfere in Iraqi affairs because as I said this is an Iraqi matter, and the Iraqi people can choose the regime that responds to its interest now and in the future. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] [passage omitted on the credibility of periodical reports that Iraq masses troops on the border with Kuwait]

[Al-Sabah] When we receive reports, whether from Arab or foreign sources, we attach importance to them until evidence is available to refute these reports. In October 1994, Iraqi troops were massed from the north to Basra, and reports came from fraternal and friendly countries exposing the intentions of the destroyer of Iraq. Would it have been reasonable to remain silent after hearing about, and seeing these Iraqi forces? Should we forget or pretend to forget just because such reports are repeated several times? What is the solution? The solution is that when we receive reports and information we must be prepared, and if something crops up refuting such reports and information then the military situation is changed. However, we are not prepared to show leniency even for a moment when

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we receive information from sources we trust. [passage omitted] Some time ago I said: I urge my brethren to show more vigilance, awareness and cooperation.

If Iraq makes another move towards Kuwait, Kuwait will be alert and will repel the attack with the cooperation of brotherly and friendly troops. [passage omitted] Such an act will expose the country to many dangers. We want to trace the movements of the Iraqi forces, even in the north, the type and number of troops whether the troops stayed in Baghdad or passed Baghdad towards Nasiriyah and Diwaniyah or camped somewhere. We study with the brothers and friends the implications and aims of such massing. [passage omitted, including indistinct question]

[Al-Sabah, answering indistinct question] You are talking about an event which has taken place? (? There is no need to say it.) I will say it.

You are asking about what the THE SUNDAY TIMES has published, London has broadcast and the French press agency has picked up. Would it be proper for an official to hide such news on the pretext that it was reported by a newspaper only? What I would say to any citizen who asks me: THE SUNDAY TIMES has reported the news, London has broadcast it, and the French press agency has reported it — where is the role of the Kuwaiti media? I did not force the newspapers to write and it was an official radio and I said that the (?government) had paid great attention to the news. Maybe the number of 50 tanks is not important. The important thing is not to hide anything from my brothers, the citizens. If nothing has happened, then nothing has happened. Where is the mistake? I know that some people wrote criticizing the media. No, the media has done its job with a sense of responsibility and did not inform us. We named the sources clearly and frankly. If nothing has happened, then nothing has happened. But what would the information minister's reply be if he was asked by any citizen? It is not possible that the minister of information did not hear or read. It would be harmless if the minister of information reports the news in a carefully-studied and reasonable way. Where is the mistake? I do not see anything wrong in this. This proves what I said about paying more attention and carefulness.

[Correspondent] My name is [words indistinct] of the Chinese news agency. The first question: What is your government's stand on Husayn Kamil who fled Iraq two months ago. Was there any contact and cooperation between you and the Iraqi opposition parties? The second question is: Can you talk to us about demarcation of the border between Kuwait and neighboring states, particularly the border between Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Iran? The last question: You talked about Kuwait's relations with the anti-Kuwait states. I would like you to explain these relations especially the recent developments between Kuwait and Jordan and Kuwait and Yemen. Thank you.

[Al-Sabah] I will answer these questions with clarity. The first thing, with regard to the Kuwaiti border, a decree was issued number (?833) which relates to the demarcation of the border. In actual fact, this decree was implemented and all the signs now exist between Iraq and Kuwait and they show that it is the border. The anti-Kuwaiti states, I believe I had answered this question frankly and said that our stand toward those states, without mentioning names, Kuwait's stand toward those states was clear and not vague or ambiguous. We announced this strategy in the National Assembly in 1993 and 1994. We are quite prepared to give you a copy of this strategy.

I think I covered the three questions concerning the border and the anti-Kuwaiti states. Ah yes, Husayn Kamil — he fled to Jordan and now he is living in Amman. We will not trouble ourselves to visit Jordan to ask Husayn Kamil to provide us with whatever information he has. And today he is in Jordan. In actual fact, I do not want to talk about the role of Husayn Kamil.

[McLean, in English] My name is William McLean from REUTER news agency. I have a couple of questions: the first is how close has Jordan come to satisfying the Kuwaiti conditions for renewing the friendship between the two countries and resuming the sale of oil to the kingdom? The second question is: how can the Kuwaiti government eliminate its budget deficit and at the same time continue to provide such big welfare state benefits to the people?

[Al-Sabah] Answer to the first question on the Jordanian-Iraqi [as heard] relations: It would be wrong to make just a big step and speak about friendship. There are Kuwaiti demands and conditions that have been conveyed to senior [Jordanian] officials dealing with what Kuwait wants. Now we want to know the position of Jordan before making the second step in the return of relations with Jordan. This answer is to the first part of the question. Now an answer to the second part of the question: as a prime minister I frankly say: yes, we have a deficit which occurred for reasons known to all my Kuwaiti brothers, but I am optimistic that, God willing, we will be able to overcome this deficit in three or four years at most. Concerning how at same time Kuwait will be able to provide all Kuwaitis what they need, well, when we prepare the budget we work out priorities in all its aspects. We

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say: yes, we need this project, while this other project may be postponed until next year or the year after, by following this policy, I am, as I said, optimistic. God wiling, we will overcome the financial deficit. There are many signs that make me feel reassured and optimistic.

[Al-Salman] I am Muhammad al-Salman of the AL-WATAN newspaper. The Middle East is witnessing changes which are not far from Kuwait. We want to know the position of Kuwait to agreements that have been signed between Palestine and Israel, all the more since Kuwait was present at the signing of the latest agreement.

[Al-Sabah] Kuwait was present at the signing ceremony, together with those invited to the ceremony. Concerning the Palestinian people, we have said more than once that we have stood and we still stand on the side of the Palestinian people, without entering into details. The Palestinian people has its own views and ideas, and we are with the Palestinian people in any decision it agrees to, in which it sees its interest whether now or in the future.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT correspondent] [passage omitted on why Kuwait has not demanded from anti-Kuwaiti states repayment of their debts and why Kuwait still receives Iraqi opposition personalities despite their clear stance that they will not recognize the new border with Iraq]

[Al-Sabah] Before we think about recovering the debts or the sums of money which had been paid to those states — and Iraq is among these states — Iraq is obliged to open a fund. You know about it. Out of this fund Iraq would pay the states which incurred losses as a result of the treacherous Iraqi aggression on our country Kuwait. This is the first thing. But with regard to the debts, today we are about to get ready to work for preventing Iraq from repeating its aggression once again. As to pursuing those other states to make them pay their debts, we are not after money as much as we are after the safety of this country.

[AL-ARAB correspondent] [passage omitted on whether Kuwait has exploited channels between some GCC countries and Iraq in solving future problems and whether Kuwait intends to take part in the coming economic summit in Amman and at what level]

[Al-Sabah] I do not deny that there are relations between some Arab states and Iraq. This is a matter that concerns those states. We do not interfere in their affairs or in the policy they have charted for themselves.

Concerning Kuwaiti participation in the economic conference in Amman, this subject is under consideration by His Highness. I believe that in the next two days Kuwait will announce its stand on this matter.

The third question which concerns... [correspondent interrupts with indistinct comment]

[Al-Sabah] I cannot go into detail, you must know. I told you this is a policy which concerns each state. Its contact with Iraq to discuss what that state seeks is not my right to talk on behalf of officials in those states but I wish from the bottom of my heart that we all have learned a lesson from the Iraqi aggression in 1990. This is a message in which I appeal to my brothers in the GCC that they should not at any day think that the danger from Iraq will be confined to Kuwait.

['Afif] I am Adil 'Afif from the Qatari paper AL-SHARQ. Your Highness, you replied to a question to the editor-in-chief of AL-QABAS by saying that so long as Saddam remains in power we must always be vigilant. Nobody would dispute this but today you said that you knew some things which led to your statements at the Diwaniyah of 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Ghanam. Is it not in the interest of the editors of the Kuwaiti papers to know what is taking place behind the scenes in order to be able to adopt a clear and frank line and prevent the confusion of the last few days?

[Al-Sabah] When I visited the Diwaniyah of 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Ghanam and talked about the Iraqi threat, that threat did not come out of the blue but was the result of documented information on the intentions of the leader of the ruling regime in Baghdad. All I said, and I repeat it, is that we are required to be more cautious and more vigilant and we need to cooperate more with one another because if something threatens the existence of the country, God forbid, we cannot possibly, as citizens of this country, stand by and watch and ask the states with which we have signed agreements to repulse the Iraqi aggression on our behalf. The vanguard of these forces, be they the air, naval, or land forces, will be Kuwaiti.

[Correspondent] We know that the battle is not with artillery guns and planes but it is a media battle primarily.

[Al-Sabah] Excuse me?

[Correspondent] It is primarily a media war. Is it difficult [as heard] or is there a possibility that the editors might be told some things in order to enable them to adopt a clear line and prevent such confusion from occurring again?

[Al-Sabah] Who told you that when I meet sometimes with the editors I do not discuss with them this subject

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and other subjects? I urge you to put this question to the editors.

[Al-Da'as] Your Highness, I am 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Da'as, correspondent of the Voice of America. Regarding peace in the Middle East, we notice that there are some differences in the Gulf countries' positions, particularly with regard to the issue of direct contact with Israel. We notice that some Gulf states made direct contacts with Israel. What is Kuwait waiting for and will there be, in the near future, meetings or anything of the sort? Thank you.

[Al-Sabah] Kuwait has its own strategy and Kuwait has its own policy which prevents it from interfering in the affairs of other states. I hope that with this short reply you will be able to understand what Kuwait wants. We do not interfere. There is a difference between hoping and defining the policy which we want to see implemented by the Gulf states. However, I sincerely hope that at the GCC summit meeting at the end of this year this subject will be raised openly and clearly to discuss the present and future of this region and ask whether these contacts will be beneficial to the peoples of this region now and in the future.

[AL-DIRAH correspondent] [passage omitted on why Kuwait still has no official spokesman and on the Iraqi referendum]

[Al-Sabah] In answer to your question about answering what is written in the Kuwaiti or non-Kuwaiti newspapers, I would say God help the person who would be chosen as a spokesman.

Second, your question asked about rumors. These are so many and they vary a lot, but my brother members of the government and myself have developed a some sort of immunity. We do not become agitated because we know the matters as they really are. I (? firmly believe) that only the truth will eventually emerge. What is written today is denied the following day. I am however with you; there are issues which leave the citizen in a state of confusion in any field. In such a case it is our duty to clarify the matters in a way that would not create confusion among the brother citizens.

Personally, I have a great patience and tolerance. However, patience has limits.

[KUWAIT TIMES correspondent] [passage omitted on why the prime minister calls now and again for national unity]

[Al-Sabah] Yes, I have called more than once for national unity; I call for it and I will continue to call for more national unity, more solidarity, more vigilance, more awareness. I could have held meetings and told people that there was no Iraqi aggression, no troops massing and that there was security. Not doubt, the stock exchange would have been bolstered, but then am I supposed to look after the security of the stock exchange or that of the country? [applause] [passage omitted]

[Rashid] I am Sa'd Rashid from the "Kuwait Times". You have spoken earlier about tackling budget deficit, do you support the idea of imposing taxes to tackle the deficit in the coming three or four years?

[Al-Sabah] This issue is being studied between me and the members of the national assembly. The principle is that there is no rejection of the idea of taxes, but the assembly wants to know the causes for it and to choose the right time to do it. However, we have to clarify that with regard to the taxes that could be collected by the concerned ministries — such as the ministries in charge of electricity, health, water — the government would take into account the financial and social conditions of citizens. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] [passage omitted on claims al-Sabah has been paying more attention to national security rather than security of the stock exchange which is as important]

[Al-Sabah] I did not ignore commercial activity whether at the stock exchange or any other field but today I am giving the question of security great importance, simply, because if there is no security there is no work, no stock exchange or any thing else. But if there is security, there would be justice and a stock exchange and everything else. I am glad I managed to answer your questions and now I bid you farewell and I invite you to a cup of tea. Thank you.

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UN Report on Weapons Paints 'Alarming Picture'

LD1110173995 London PRESS ASSOCIATION in English 1717 GMT 11 Oct 95

[Report by defense correspondent Charles Miller, PA News]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Publication of a shock report detailing the huge scale of Iraq's secret weapons programme tonight will force the United Nations to maintain sweeping economic sanctions against Sadam Husayn's regime.

British officials said the report by the chief UN weapons inspector, Rolf Ekeus, "painted an alarming picture" and made a total nonsense of Iraq's previous weapons declarations.

The report will be discussed by the UN Security Council on Friday and officials said there would be no option but to continue sanctions when they are reviewed in mid-November.

Mr Ekeus discovered that the Iraqi biological warfare programme had developed sufficient germs to kill the world's population many times over.

More than 10 times the amount of anthrax declared by the Iraqis was found together with a frightening array of other viruses, bacteria and toxins.

Among the viral agents was enterovirus, which causes painful blindness; aflatoxin, a carcinogenic that causes liver and kidney failure and genetic disorders; ricin, that produces lung damage and botulinum, which is one of the most toxic substances known to man and causes paralysis and death.

Massive amounts of chemical agents, such as sarin gas which was used in the terrorist attack on the Tokyo underground, were unearthed.

And there is now firm documentary evidence that both biological and chemical agents were put into the warheads of missiles and rockets, although they were not used in the 1991 Gulf War.

Mr Ekeus found there was no proof that all the biological weapons stocks had been destroyed.

He also cites the discovery by the International Atomic Energy Authority that Iraq's crash programme in 1990-91 to develop a nuclear bomb came within months of success.

"The nature and scale of this deception only increases doubts about the seriousness of the Iraqis' keenness to provide accurate information," said an official.

Scrapping weapons of mass destruction is the key to lifting the oil embargo, part of the sanctions imposed on Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

Mr Ekeus said Iraq had still not filled in all the gaps and was unable to say when his work would be finished.

He said only that if "Iraq were genuinely to translate its statements into action, there would be a real hope for the completion of the task entrusted to the Special Commission within a reasonable time-frame."

France and Russia have been pressing for sanctions to be eased if Iraq cooperates over the elimination of its weapons of mass destruction.

Official links have been re-established, much to the annoyance of the rest of Western Europe and the United States.

But the French and Russians were reported to be "surprised and angry" at the revelations of the extent of Iraq's deception, recognising that sanctions would have to continue.

There is concern that Sadam could decide to take some form of military action in response to the continuation of sanctions.

Ekeus Said 'Lying' on UN Report

NC1210091595 Paris AFP in English 0835 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Oct 12 (AFP)—Iraq denounced Rolf Ekeus as a "liar" after his UN commission on disarming Iraq issued a sharply critical report ensuring that economic sanctions will remain in force.

The UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) headed by Ekeus reported Wednesday [11 October] to the Security Council that Iraq "had been misleading the commission by withholding information" on development of its nuclear and chemical weapons programs.

"He is lying," Vice President Taha Muhyi-al-Din Ma'ruf told journalists.

"He is a big liar because in one phrase he said that Iraq is very helpful and cooperating with the committee and in the other said that Iraq is keeping secret many other things," he said.

The UNSCOM report in New York said the fact that Iraq had handed over new documents and expressed willingness to cooperate "is a hopeful sign" that the UN investigators can determine Iraq's compliance with UN resolutions and lift the sanctions.

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The report, and a similar one by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to the Security Council, made it a certainty that sanctions would be maintained for at least the next several months, diplomats said.

UN trade and oil sanctions were imposed on Iraq after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

Under resolutions to free Kuwait in the 1991 Gulf war, UNSCOM must certify that Iraq has dismantled its weapons of mass destruction before the oil embargo is lifted.

Spokesman: U.S. Remarks on Referendum 'Impudent'

JN1210085095 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0752 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 12 Oct (INA)—An official spokesman for the Ministry of Culture and Information described the comments on the Iraqi referendum by the U.S. State Department spokesman as impudent and indicative of the nervousness and frustration marking the U.S. Administration's treatment of Iraq.

In a statement to the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY today, the spokesman added: Hence, no wonder that this spokesman, Nicholas Burns, is making a nervous judgment claiming that the referendum will be rigged four days ahead of the referendum.

The spokesman went on to say: The Iraqi people would detest the notion of having their national history vindicated by a certificate of good conduct from U.S. imperialists, who are hostile to true democracy and violate human rights not only in Iraq, but in each and every country plagued with the "ugly American."

The spokesman said: The problem of the U.S. Administration lies in the fact that it does not feel that it is suffering a moral crisis. It is scared of dealing with honorable and patriotic leaders and nationalist regimes, because it only wants to see the world, including its politicians, thinkers, and regimes, work to promote its illegitimate interests. It condones and even welcomes relations with corrupt and weak rulers who accept bribes and agent regimes, something it failed to achieve in Iraq.

SAIRI Calls Saddam's Referendum 'Desperate Move'

LD1210090495 Tehran IRNA in English 0741 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Oct. 12, IRNA — Head of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SAIRI) Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Baqir Hakim branded the coming presidential referendum to be held in Iraq on October 15, as a desperate move to change world public opinion.

In an interview with the English-language daily TEHRAN TIMES, printed Thursday, Hakim added that the referendum was planned to deceive the world as it will be carried out by force and with the Iraqi people having no real voice in it.

The SAIRI head said, "As far as Saddam Husayn is concerned the Iraqi people are not important, his only concern being to continue his autocratic rule over all aspects of the people's life." He also spoke of the loopholes in the Iraqi constitution, pointing to the provision that no one, other than the chairman of Iraq's Revolutionary Council may be nominated as a candidate for the presidency.

Another deficiency in the Iraqi Constitution which Hakim pointed out is that if the chairman of the Revolutionary Council fails to win the elections, the council itself (of which Saddam is currently chairman) would debate and decide the question.

He said that Saddam initially spoke of secret balloting but then decided to make people write their choice at the back of their ballots. It is worth noting that he is the only candidate. "Certain measures have also been adopted by the government to deprive those who refrain from participating in the referendum from receiving essential goods," the ayatollah declared.

Hakim also revealed further sanctions such as threats of arrest issued to people if they refuse to take part in the referendum, adding that the heads of family tribes whose members fail to take part have also been threatened with possible detention and forced emigration.

Referring to statements made in an address before the Iraqi National Assembly by a Saddam aide and head of the board overseeing the referendum, 'Izzat Ibrahim al-Duri, Hakim said that they reveal the truth that the government is not really interested in obtaining the people's mandate but only wants the world to know that the Iraqi people remain loyal to Saddam. This was especially important after the defection (to Jordan) of several important members of Saddam's family, the SAIRI head said.

Baghdad TV Reports Pupils' Support for President

JN1110192795 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 11 Oct 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] At 1000 today, hundreds of thousands of pupils in all preparatory and secondary schools, who are not allowed by the Constitution to

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participate in the referendum because they are under 18 years of age, shouted with one voice: Yes, Yes, Yes to President Saddam Husayn.

All schools in Iraq held festivals on this dear occasions. Speeches were delivered on behalf of school staff, teachers, and pupils. The speeches voiced great loyalty and love for the first teacher, leader President Saddam Husayn. They pledged to his excellency that the unfair embargo imposed by the enemies of humanity and peace against the people of Iraq will only strengthen their determination to adhere to the leadership of leader President Saddam Husayn because he is the symbol of their pride and dignity and the builder of Iraq's great glory.

Tariq 'Aziz Receives Yemeni Adviser

JN1210094495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1118 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 11 Oct (INA)—Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz received 'Abdallah al-Bar, presidential adviser in the Republic of Yemen and assistant secretary general of the People's Congress Party, and his delegation today.

Discussions dealt with fraternal bilateral relations and ways to develop them in a manner that serves the national and pan-Arab interests.

The deputy prime minister hailed the position of fraternal Yemen—government and people—toward the causes of the Iraqi people.

'Abdallah al-Bar stressed that the Yemeni position toward Iraq was firm, and reiterated the call for ending the suffering of the Iraqi people and lifting the unjust siege imposed on them.

The Yemeni delegation arrived in Baghdad yesterday to attended the public referendum. The delegation includes Humud [not further identified], member of the General Secretariat of the General People's Congress Party. The meeting was attended by the Yemeni ambassador in Baghdad.

Republican Guard Officers Said Killed in Attack

JN1210112695 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1315 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Our rebellious Muslim people in Iraq have continued to deal heroic blows to the mercenaries and dens of the collapsing regime in Baghdad. Sources of our zealous mujahidin report from Baghdad that a victorious fighting group while driving in a Chevrolet Caprice last week attacked a gathering of officers of the Saddamist [Republican] Guard near the Abu-Ghurayb area, a Baghdad Suburb.

The sources said that four officers were killed, including a captain named Wa'il; and six other officers were wounded, including a captain named Safa'.

The sources said that all of these officers are from the al-Majd Battalion of the Saddamist guard.

Our sources in Baghdad assert that our mujahidin left the area after the operation and returned to the bases of jihad to continue to deal blows to the criminal 'Aflaqites.

Government Artillery Pounds Kurdish Area

NC1010162695 [Clandestine] Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 10 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Citing its correspondent, the KURDISTAN NWAY news paper reported today that the 'Aflaqite regime's heavy artillery bombarded the villages of (Jalta) and (Bandaris) in the Irbil Governorate at 0900 yesterday. The brutal shelling killed one citizen.

KDP Spokesman on Turkish Incursion, PKK Claims

JN1210094995 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1800 GMT 10 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sources from outside Kurdistan reported on 9 October the withdrawal of the Turkish forces which had crossed the borders. The Turkish army announced this operation on 8 October.

Some parties [words indistinct] in the size of the said operation. To inform the public about the truth of this operation, a press spokesman for our party, the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP], stated the following:

Our party emphasizes that it has been disturbed by the Turkish forces crossing into Iraqi Kurdistan. This is not the first time that the Turkish forces have crossed the borders without our knowledge or approval, thus creating political problems for Kurdistan.

On this occasion, we strongly refute the false accusations that there is an agreement between us and the Turks in this respect. It seems that these parties, through their dissemination of such claims, seek to conceal their political and military defeats. The Kurdistan Workers Party [PKK] is one of these parties which tries to conceal its defeats from the people and the party and tries to justify these defeats by propagating these claims and intentionally blowing this Turkish military operation out of proportion.

On the Turkish violation of our borders, the press spokesman said that our party has been disturbed by this operation and called on Turkey to withdraw its forces. According to the reports we received, Turkey effectively withdrew its forces.

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The spokesman added: Ali Haydar Kaytan, member of the PKK political bureau and military official, made two exposed claims through MED TV on the reality of their aggression on our party. What surprises us is that Ali Haydar Kaytan who is at the battle front can see for himself the size of the PKK defeat. Then, how can he utter such lies and mention areas where the PKK had never had any presence?

We believe that the PKK officials who are in al-Biqa' Valley cannot be blamed if they fabricate such lies. The one to be blamed is Ali Haydar Kaytan who is at the battle front. How can he face his supporters when the PKK defeats become exposed?

In conclusion, the spokesman said: We invite all journalists and local and foreign news agencies and the PKK media organs to come and see reality with their own eyes and watch from a close distance the PKK defeats in the aggression they had waged against our party.

U.S. 'Continued Violation' Protested to UN

JN1010190895 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1035 GMT 10 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 10 Oct (INA)—Iraq has once again protested to the United Nations the continued violation of Iraqi airspace by U.S. aircraft for the purpose of provocation and surveillance.

In a memorandum to UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali, Nizar Hamdun, Iraq's permanent envoy to the United Nations, said that in the last 20 days of September, the U.S. aircraft conducted 698 hostile sorties over various areas in northern and southern Iraq. Iraq's permanent envoy asked that the memorandum be distributed as a UN Security Council document.

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Rabin Under Guard Following Right-Wing Attacks

TA1110192395 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 11 Oct 95

[Correspondent Hezi Mahlev video report; italicized passages are recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Mahlev] Now for a report on the attempts to physically attack Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and other ministers. Two right-wing activists identified with the Kakh movement were arrested today. They are suspected of damaging the prime minister's official car. Yesterday, Jerusalem District Police detectives arrested two minors from Netanya who are suspected of being among those who last week caused serious damage to a car carrying Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer. The violence against cabinet officials also manifested itself today in attempts by ultra-Orthodox crowds to forcibly block Religious Minister Shim'on Shetrit's way to the Western Wall. President 'Ezer Weizman today sharply condemned the demonstrators who cursed and humiliated the prime minister yesterday at an assembly of English speakers. The president stressed that the physical attacks on cabinet ministers are an unprecedented phenomenon. Weizman noted that there are forces capable of halting this deterioration.

[Kakh activist Itamar Ben-Gvir] *Limor, a demonstration is slated to take place today at 1600. Rabin is scheduled to arrive at the Israel Museum at 1600. We have information that he will apparently arrive at the Saker Garden, and we have to get the gang together and give him a reception. We also have to make signs saying that Rabin is a traitor, Rabin is a murderer.*

[Mahlev] The Kakh activists are well acquainted with the media and familiar with the prime minister's schedule. The result of this is that the prime minister has recently come under increasingly tighter guard. This was how Rabin was received yesterday at the Wingate Institute. Although Mr. Rabin was surrounded by numerous bodyguards, one of the demonstrators managed to get close enough to the prime minister to pose a tangible physical threat. Itamar Ben- Gvir, the coordinator of the Kakh movement's youth department, and Arye Oran, an ultra-Orthodox extreme right-wing activist, are regular participants in demonstrations against the government. We asked to interview them near the site of the last demonstration, opposite the Prime Minister's Office. The two youths, truculent and sure of themselves, agreed without hesitation.

[Mahlev] *Did you succeed in ripping the emblem off Rabin's car?*

[Ben-Gvir] *Yes. This is the emblem. Our people managed to rip the emblem off the car. This shows that just as we got to the emblem we can get to Rabin.*

[Mahlev] *Can you just attack the prime minister's car or physically assault another minister and continue to move around freely?*

[Ben-Gvir] *When the prime minister does such terrible things, I think that one can definitely take serious steps against him.*

[Mahlev] The calls of Rabin is a murderer and a traitor have become almost routine; however, at the demonstration held by the right wing last night, the crudeness reached new heights. Pictures of Rabin in a Gestapo uniform were displayed by the protesters. The car of Minister Ben-Eli'ezer was surrounded by demonstrators who threatened to physically attack him.

[Mahlev] *Are you not afraid of the police? How many criminal incidents are on your record?*

[Ben-Gvir] *I have 120 incidents on my criminal record.*

[Mahlev] *All for similar incidents?*

[Ben-Gvir] *For activities on behalf of the Israeli people and Eretz Yisra'el.*

[Mahlev] Traffic was slow near the Prime Minister's Office today. The two radical right-wing activists, both well known in the area, even exchanged words with security personnel who apparently summoned the police who arrested the two youths. [passage omitted]

[Mahlev] Several right-wing officials today criticized those who cursed the prime minister yesterday. Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu condemned the phenomenon, while other Likud members called for continuing the attacks against the government. The officials were speaking at a convention of the Likud bureau in the settlement of Efrat. [passage omitted]

Civil Administration Turns 3 Offices Over to PA

TA1110164795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Civil Administration offices in Qabatiyah and Kharbata were turned over to representatives of the Palestinian Authority [PA] this afternoon. At the conclusion of the ceremonies, the local residents burst into the offices, raised PLO flags, and hung up pictures of Yasir 'Arafat.

Major General Oren Shahor, the coordinator of government activities in the territories, complained to the Palestinians that local residents hurled stones at IDF

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[Israel Defense Forces] troops when the Civil Administration offices in Salfit were being vacated. The PA representatives promised to ensure that the evacuation of the Civil Administration offices would take place without any disturbances.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1605 GMT on 10 October adds that "the Civil Administration office in Yattah was also turned over to the Palestinians."]

Peace Now Reports Building Drive in West Bank

TA1210065295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 12 Oct 95

[Report by Gil Litman]

[FBIS Translated Text] A report by the Peace Now settlement monitoring team reveals that since the beginning of the year, the construction of 1,400 new housing units has started in the Jewish settlements of Judaea and Samaria. Another piece of information Peace Now has published is that some 6,000 apartments are currently at various stages of construction in the territories. When they are inhabited, the apartments will provide a significant boost to the population of the settlements and will seriously harm the political process, Peace Now officials claim. Gil Litman reports:

[Litman] The Peace Now settlement patrol is still working. It has issued a periodical report indicating that despite everything, the Judaea and Samaria settlements are experiencing a construction drive. In 1995, some 3,800 housing units were completed in the area dubbed Greater Jerusalem after the work was approved by the special ministerial committee. Another 3,900 apartments will be built in the coming year or two in the area between Ma'ale Adumim, the 'Etzyon Bloc, and Giv'at Ze'ev.

The surprising data was found in the smaller settlements, located far from Jerusalem: Pney Haver, in the Judaean Desert — some 20 new housing units; a similar number in Pdu'el and 'Aley Zahav in Samaria; and some 30 apartments are being built this year in Hinanit, in the Janin area. The data speaks of apartments the building of which started in January 1995. The total number of apartments currently under construction in Judaea and Samaria is more than 6,000.

This is an amazingly worrisome figure, says Mosi Raz, one of the Peace Now leaders:

[Raz] An examination by the Peace Now settlement monitoring team, which examined every settlement individually, shows that the construction of some 1,400 apartments started in 1995 and that some 6,000 are currently under construction. This is the largest number of apartments built since the days of the Likud government. What is happening, in fact, is that despite the good intentions of the peace government, the settling policy executed on the ground is similar to the Likud policy. This move is planting mines of hate on the path of peace.

The data shows that if all the houses are inhabited, some 25,000 additional settlers will be moving in. This is a very significant reinforcement for those who oppose the peace process and demonstrate against the government.

[Litman] The figures prove that the Israeli public is not abandoning its land even when times are hard, says the spokesman for the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. While the data is seen as a bad surprise by Peace Now, the settlers' leaders feel that it is perfectly natural. The settlements in Judaea and Samaria are experiencing a construction drive, the spokesman says, in a rare expression of agreement with Peace Now.

Ben-Eli'ezer Calls Report 'False'

TA1210074595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 12 Oct 95

[Telephone interview with Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer, construction and housing minister, by correspondent Yoram Ronen "a short while ago"; place not given — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ben-Eli'ezer] I had hoped that Peace Now would be responsible with the reports it issues. I must tell you that as construction and housing minister, I do no know what they are talking about.

[Ronen] Are you denying the facts?

[Ben-Eli'ezer] No, I just do not know what they are talking about. I know that a ministerial committee was established, of which I am a member. The committee approved the construction of 500 housing units in Ma'ale Adumim; the continued construction of some 500 housing units, I believe, in Betar; and work on privately owned land in Giv'at Ze'ev, which, as far as I know, has not yet started. If Peace Now views 500 apartments built in Ma'ale Adumim with the government's approval, and if they mean that building in Betar is expanding Jewish settlement — well, I can only wish them well. They have some imagination. I do not know what else to call it. These days, when tempers flare, I would expect more responsibility. The easiest thing is to attack everything in these reports about which I can say only one thing: These are false reports.

[Ronen] Perhaps the Peace Now people are referring to construction work in Jerusalem?

[Ben-Eli'ezer] Do they? Perhaps they mean work in Tel Aviv, Rishon Leziyyon, or Nes Ziyyona? True,

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this year, and as we speak, I am building some 95,000 housing units. I must tell you that this borders on gross irresponsibility. I have seen these figures time and time again. They keep repeating them. They keep rekindling the fires. I simply do not know what is behind this. It may well be that some....

[Ronen, interrupting] Perhaps they want to help the Rabin government get reelected?

[Ben-Eli'ezer] Please, let them do us no favors. I want them to leave us alone, step aside, and mind their own business. They should go to the army, work on their own homes, and leave us alone. I do not need the reports. Now I am beginning to understand why U.S. Embassy representatives have suddenly asked for a meeting with me. Now I understand.

[Ronen] When will the meeting take place?

[Ben-Eli'ezer] I do not know. They wanted to meet me, and now I am beginning to understand what this is all about. There is yet another absurd thing about this. They have been sending their reports to everyone in the world, including Qol Yisra'el, but as far as the minister whom the government tasked with construction works in the State of Israel is concerned, this report is secret.

[Ronen] Peace Now may not, but the Americans certainly do view construction in neighborhoods such as Pisgat Ze'ev as settlements. This is what they call it there, and you must be aware of this. Could you tell us the number of apartments built in Jerusalem neighborhoods?

[Ben-Eli'ezer] This is called Jerusalem proper. We have just put out a tender for the construction of 1,100 housing units in Pisgat Ze'ev, which is similar to Rehavya, as far as I understand it. If they count this, I can only wish them well.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 12 October adds: "A Peace Now spokesman said in reaction that the movement's report was presented to the Construction and Housing Ministry two days ago and was never given to the U.S. Embassy in Israel. The spokesman says he wonders why Minister Ben-Eli'ezer chose not to comment on the continuation of construction work in small settlements such as Pdu'el, 'Aley Zahav, and Hinanit. He noted that the Peace Now report addresses construction work in Judaea, Samaria, and Greater Jerusalem, and not inside Jerusalem."]

New Development Projects Approved on Golan Heights

TA1210111795 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT [MAMON supplement] in Hebrew 12 Oct 95 p 1

[Report by 'Ofer Petersburg]

[FBIS Translated Text] Despite the standoff in the negotiations on the future of the Golan Heights, approval for extensive construction on state lands in the Golan was recently granted. The approval refers to plans for the expansion of five new industrial parks abutting the Druze townships of Mas'adah, Buq'ata, Majdal Shams, and al-Ghajar. The construction will be financed by Israeli elements. Our correspondent has learned that the state lands were granted without a tender, in violation of the law.

The plans were drafted by the Ma'ale Hermon local committee. The lands are owned by the Israel Lands Administration and by private elements.

Each of the industrial parks lies on 20 to 40 dunams and contains vacant Lands Administration plots and densely built private plots. The new plans aim to benefit the private owners.

The largest industrial park — on approximately 100 dunams — will be built in the village of Mas'adah. All the industrial parks are close to the trans—Golan highway. The area is currently classified as a confrontation line zone, which entitles local plants to tax benefits and government grants. [passage omitted]

Furthermore, approval has been granted for a new tourism project in the Golan, and its plans are now being processed. The project is a nonconventional medicine resort near Wadi El Al, which overlooks Mount Hermon. At present the site is home to a hiking stop which boasts a lawn for sleeping-bag tourists, and Moshav Avney Eytan entrepreneurs plan to build a 120-room resort on the 43-dunam site.

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Al-Kabariti on Ties With Syria, Iraq, Gulf

NC1210114795 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 5 Oct 95 pp 1, 17

[Report by George Bakasini in New York]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jordanian Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti hoped that the meeting between U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' will result in a resumption of the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli- Lebanese negotiations.

In a statement to AL-SAFIR on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session in New York, al-Kabariti noted "a chill in relations with Syria we hope will end." He expressed astonishment that Syria and Lebanon should have reservations about Amman's economic summit "given their enthusiasm for the Barcelona summit". [passage omitted]

Asked bout the Gulf states' reluctance to open up to Jordan after the recent Iraqi developments, and what alternative Jordan has, the Jordanian foreign minister said: "With the exception of Kuwait, I do not think there is any reluctance on the part of the Gulf states. Our special relations, especially with Oman, are outstanding as always; our relations with Qatar and Bahrain can also be described now as excellent; and our relations with Saudi Arabia are good and apt to grow and develop. I think the issue now depends on the extent of Kuwait's readiness to respond to Jordan's serious effort to improve and normalize relations with it."

Asked how Jordan is dealing with Iraq in light of U.S. reservations about such a dealing, al-Kabariti said: "Our position on Iraq has nothing to do with the U.S. position. Our position on Iraq is based on the constant Jordanian principle that calls on Iraq to implement the international resolutions; we have always advised Iraq to do what it has to do. But our method in the past was calm, preventive diplomacy and undeclared messages. Now, however, we found it better to convey our messages to the Iraqi leadership publicly and in a loud voice. This is a result of our conviction that the blockade and the suffering of the Iraqi people gravely endanger Iraq's unity and territorial integrity. The continuation of Iraq's positions and the failure to comply with international resolutions may prolong the blockade and bring closer the possibility of dividing and threatening Iraq, which would threaten the region's safety and security."

Asked to evaluate Jordan's relations with Syria at this stage in light of recent Jordanian measures on the Syrian border, al-Kabariti said: "There is not any extraordinary measure on the Jordanian side of the border. I believe our trade ties are normal. Our official contacts are continuing, and my meetings with the Syrian foreign minister on the sidelines of all Arab, regional, and international conferences never ceased. There is a chill in the relations we seek and hope to remove because we view Jordanian-Syrian relations as basic and very important, not only by virtue of neighborliness or the historical ties between our countries, but also because we fully believe that the Jordanian position, especially as far as the peace process is concerned, serves Syria's negotiating track. I hope we will reach a common understanding about these issues. For our part, we will not stop our sincere efforts to improve our relations with Syria."

On the reservations both Syria and Lebanon are expressing about Amman's economic summit, al-Kabariti said: "I do not find any reason for these reservations, especially in light of the two countries' enthusiasm for participation in the Barcelona conference. As we know, the Barcelona conference is not confined to economic matters. There will be a declaration of principles document on the political and security partnership among the states of the region. The document will also deal with the social and human partnerships, as well as the financial and economic partnerships. These issues will involve all Mediterranean countries, including Israel. We therefore find no justification for enthusiasm for participation in the Barcelona conference, in its three dimensions, when there are reservations about participation in the Amman conference with its one dimension—the economic dimension." [passage omitted]

I asked the Jordanian foreign minister about Syria's reservations regarding the peace negotiations as highlighted by Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar's speech to the UN General Assembly. I noted that the speech highlighted the obstacles which Israel is placing regarding not only the technical aspects of the negotiations, but also the essence and principles of peace, as was evident in the Taba agreement. I asked al-Kabariti if he expects Israel to remove these obstacles. He said: "I sensed some tough Syrian positions and some Syrian suggestions regarding the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. I read the agreement carefully and noticed no clauses or accords that may harm the Syrian negotiating track." [passage omitted]

Comments on Ties With Egypt, Israel

NC1210075895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0605 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 12 Oct (MENA)—Jordanian Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has stated that Egypt is the key to joint Arab action and the bulwark of Arab cooperation and destiny.

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In an interview published in the newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH today, he said Egyptian-Jordanian relations are strong and based on bilateral cooperation and coordination, adding that the tempo of understanding, cooperation, and coordination is growing and escalating.

Al-Kabariti denied reports that Jordanian-Egyptian relations have soured recently, saying these reports merely express the personal opinion of some writers. He expressed optimism over the prospects for joint cooperation and coordination on official and regional levels, because Jordan and Egypt are in one trench in the peace process and in the quest for a unified Arab stand and regional Arab cooperation.

Asked about the reasons for the quick pace of normalization between Jordan and Israel even though the water and Jerusalem issues remain unresolved, al-Kabariti said the Jordanian-Israeli treaty includes many agreements, but the implementation of some are delayed. However, we are committed to reaching an agreement on all points—those on which there is agreement and those on which there is disagreement. He added that the march of Jordanian-Israeli relations is satisfactory. It will help remove all the security concerns of ordinary Israelis and will be a factor for promoting the peace process between Israel and other Arab parties.

Al-Kabariti said Jordan has concluded balanced agreements that do not include any security arrangements on the Jordanian-Israeli border. The Jordanian army can deploy on the Jordanian-Israeli border in the form, number, and way it wants and without any restrictions or conditions.

Regarding Jordanian-Iraqi relations, al-Kabariti said the defection of Husayn Kamil Hasan al-Majid to Jordan has had an adverse effect on the official relations between the two states but Jordan believes in separating political relations from human, popular, economic, and cultural relations. He added that Jordan wants to keep its border with Iraq open and to continue to exchange trade with Iraq within the framework of Arab and international resolutions. He said Husayn Kamil's defection to Jordan is not considered an intervention in Iraq's domestic affairs.

Regarding Jordanian-Syrian relations, al-Kabariti denied that these relations are tense but admitted that right now they are cool, expressing hope that warmth will be restored. He said he met with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' on the sidelines of the Arab League Council meeting and spoke with him about this subject. He said there was common understanding between them.

Regarding Jordan's jurisdiction over the holy places in Jerusalem, al-Kabariti said it is a continuation of an historic fact. Jordan wants to continue to carry out its duty as a custodian of the holy places. At the same time it wants to maintain the Arab character of Jerusalem and to make it the capital of Palestine.

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Buwayz on Presidential Term, Peace Talks, Iraq

NC1110190095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1535 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Oct (MENA)—Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has said that an extension of President Ilyas al-Hirawi's term in office must be associated with a clear political plan that achieves national gains for the country so that it can be justified to the Lebanese public.

In a statement to the French-language weekly AL-AHRAM HEBDO, Buwayz said there is no crisis over this issue because Lebanon is a democratic country. He explained that the extension requires a constitutional amendment that only the Chamber of Deputies can make. He said he does not oppose the extension but he believes that the extension for President al-Hirawi must be viewed as an exceptional case. Like any other exception, he said, the extension needs to be justified. He said President Ilyas al-Hirawi must adopt a comprehensive political program capable of achieving major national interests.

Asked about the recent attempt to assassinate the Israeli chief of staff in southern Lebanon and whether Israel will use it as an excuse to delay peace negotiations with Lebanon, Faris Buwayz said: A clear reading of the situation in southern Lebanon shows that Israel, despite all its military technology and its forces in the region, has failed to annihilate the resistance, which costs it massive losses daily.

It is high time Israel realized that it is impossible to control the situation there, he said. He noted that the attempt to assassinate the Israeli chief of staff was only further proof that the occupation of south Lebanon never strengthens Israel's security shield.

On Israel's procrastination over the Lebanese negotiating track within the peace process, the Lebanese foreign minister said that if Israel wants to delay the negotiations with Lebanon, this is its own business. If it thinks that its presence in southern Lebanon is something positive that serves its security, then no one can convince it of the contrary. He noted that his country has offered a clear proposal based on Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Lebanese territories up to the internationally recognized border. This is the only way for the Lebanese Government to extend its authority over all Lebanese territory and to undertake to maintain security and stability on its side of the border, he said. He added: Israel, however, resorted to maneuvers and made hollow statements without offering serious proposals on this.

Asked about Amman's economic summit and the refusal of Lebanon and Syria to participate in it, Minister Buwayz said: From the beginning of the peace negotiations, Lebanon decided not to take part in meetings that seek to implement multilateral projects as long as the bilateral negotiations with Israel fail to achieve positive results toward peace.

He explained that Lebanon is pursuing this policy for the following three reasons: First, we believe that it is politically, psychologically, and logically impossible to join a multilateral project while we are still not sure that peace will be achieved and while we do not even know what form this peace will take. Second, it is not easy for us to receive blows in the south — shelling, destruction, massacres, and arrests — and yet go to discuss cultural or touristic issues while our people are still suffering. Third, Israel's insistence on holding such a conference shows that it is only willing to reap the fruits of peace before undertaking to fulfill its obligations resulting from this peace.

Asked what is the solution to this problem, Buwayz said: The least the Arab League can do, if it is not able to offer political or military support to the countries with occupied lands or to those who are in a state of war with Israel, is not to rush through the door of normalization with Israel. Otherwise, he asked, what is the meaning of words like "solidarity," "brotherhood," and "Arabism?"

Regarding the latest developments in Iraq, Buwayz said the Iraqi regime made serious mistakes and is suffering from huge problems. He noted, however, that currently there is no realistic alternative to the existing regime in Baghdad. He added: For this reason, I believe that the situation is tragic and there is currently no hope for any relaxation of the situation.

Asked if a serious Arab reconciliation is a necessary prerequisite to save Iraq, Buwayz said that views on this issue are not identical but obviously there is agreement in views on Iraq. The recent meeting among the foreign ministers of Syria, Turkey, and Iran and the contacts held with Egypt are evidence of this. He noted that there is a minimum agreement on the possibility of putting forward proposals that will not harm the stability and interests of neighboring countries.

Asked if Lebanon adopts a different stance on the Barcelona conference scheduled for the end of November, which includes the Mediterranean countries and the European Union, Buwayz said that the Barcelona conference is different and independent from the peace process. He noted that this conference is intended to replace certain bilateral ties with a comprehensive strategy. It will also try to solve common problems between certain Mediterranean countries and the European countries.

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Discussing Lebanon's refusal to receive the Palestinian deportees from Libya, Buwayz justified this by saying that "Libya's decision has caused massive repercussions for Lebanon, which cannot receive such a large number of deportees, adding that no country in the world would open its borders without reservations and preparation."

Asked about the Arab League's role in solving this problem, Buwayz said he believes that the responsibility for finding a solution to this problem falls on the Palestinians, the Arab League, and the fraternal countries before Lebanon.

On Lebanon's stance on the Arab code of honor being discussed by the Arab League, Buwayz said: "This is primarily a moral issue and Lebanon supports it provided it receives Arab consensus. On the establishment of an Arab court of justice, Buwayz said that it is a sensitive issue that requires thorough discussion.

Clashes, 'Aggression' Reported in South

NC1110194495 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Resistance today foiled an attempt by the Israeli enemy to advance toward the town of Kafr Tibnit. This morning, an Israeli foot patrol backed by a mechanized force infiltrated from al-Shaqif Castle toward the eastern quarter of the town. The Resistance fighters clashed with the Israeli patrol, wounding an Israeli soldier. The Israeli artillery in al-Dabshan pounded the eastern quarter of Kafr Tibnit and Mazra'at al- Hamra' with 155-mm field artillery. The Resistance fighters attacked the Israeli positions in 'Ali al-Tahir, Taw'amat Niha, and al-Hardun.

Israeli military aircraft flew over the south today and staged low-level reconnaissance sorties over Sidon and the camps. The Israelis also shelled the outskirts of al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa, causing property damage. The bombardment was accompanied by raking operations of nearby valleys.

In retaliation for the Israeli acts of aggression, the Resistance forces launched several assaults against the Israeli posts in 'Ali al-Tahir, al-Hardun, and Taw'amat Niha.

In a statement released this afternoon, the Resistance said its fighters launched two assaults on the Agent militia [South Lebanese Army] posts in Taw'amt Niha and al-Halazun. Resistance sources said that the Israeli artillery this afternoon pounded the areas of al-Mansuri, Majdal Zun, and Buyut al-Sayyid with field artillery. The Israelis also bombarded the areas of Mlita, al-Luwayzah, al-Tasah, al-Jabal al-Rafi', and al-Wadi al-Akhdar in Iqlim al-Tuffah with field artillery. The Resistance retaliated by pounding the Israeli posts in Sujud and al-Rayhan and scored direct hits.

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Radio on al-Asad's AL-AHRAM Interview

JN1110145495 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 11 Oct 95

[Interview with President Hafiz al-Asad by Ibrahim Nafi', Cairo AL-AHRAM chief editor, in Damascus; date not given; published in the 11 October issue of AL-AHRAM — read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Nafi'] All the leaders who attended the five-way summit in Washington during the ceremony marking the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement missed both Syria and Lebanon. My question is: When will the Syrian-Israeli talks resume, and on what basis will Syria agree to resume the negotiations?

[Al-Asad] We participated in the consultations that led to the Madrid Conference. There was a broad understanding, or rather broad understandings, with the U.S. delegation, which proposed the initiative. During these consultations, we explained how we see the peace process. We have always said — and I recall that very well — especially after the October 1973 War that we want peace. In my talks with former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, and in my talks with all the Arabs and foreigners who are as concerned about that question as we are, I said that we want peace. On 6 October [1973], I said in a speech to the nation in the first hour after the war started that we are advocates of peace, that we are working to achieve peace for us and for others and for all peoples of the world, and that we are not aggressors. On the contrary, we are fending off aggression. We are not advocates of battle.

That position remained unchanged from 1973 until the 1990's. There have always been initiatives to achieve peace in the region that were proposed by individuals and states. You know that the Americans had initiatives before, at the time of former Secretary of State George Schultz.

[Nafi'] Were they unacceptable?

[Al-Asad] Of course, they were completely unacceptable. There were several initiatives, which we felt were only a demonstration of good intentions on the part of those who proposed them, but they lacked anything to support them, not even a small stone. Therefore, they did not stand any chance of success or any satisfactory conclusion. We have always said in our discussions that we seek peace on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions 338 and 224. Although no one is speaking about 338, and all discussion is focused on 224, the backbone of peace is Resolution 338 and the convening of an international peace conference. Consequently, even before the Madrid Conference, our position was that we seek peace on the basis of the international resolutions since they constitute the means and the road to the international conference. Then came the U.S. initiative, which was proposed to us, of course. We studied it, and discussed it for some time. The initiative was good indeed, especially since it said the same thing we said about the international resolutions, and so forth.

We discussed the conference, and we had our own viewpoint about it. As you know, Israel traditionally did not want the conference. Hence, the United States, which launched the initiative, began to play the role of mediator or that is how we saw it — a sponsor of the conference and a mediator. In fact, the United States is a broker and not a mere messenger, meaning that it is an honest partner. This is something good anyway, and they really exerted effort. What is important is that it was clear that our adherence to an international conference did not mean that all the conferees would remain sitting around the table of the first session in Madrid. It also did not mean that discussions should continue in such an impractical way. This situation would not be practical when the talks reach the level of committees and other bodies, especially since there are certain countries, and I mean Jordan, which had contacts with Israel for quite some time. This is my viewpoint, and it is also a fact. Late [Egyptian] President Anwar al-Sadat spoke a lot about these kinds of issues.

However, we do not understand and it is not natural for Jordan to just accept the broad lines of its agreement with Israel and leave details about the borders and other issues out. Of course, this is one point.

[Nafi'] Is it normal for every country to have its own problems and preoccupations?

[Al-Asad] Yes, every country has its own preoccupations and problems. It is normal for such matters to exist. However, what is important when we talk about a comprehensive peace forever is for such peace to prevail throughout the region. It should be peace for all the Arab countries, and, naturally, for the non-Arab countries concerned with such peace — one which they apply and is applied to them.

What is important is that an agreement was reached with [James] Baker. We reached something good after long discussions, of course. We said that this U.S. initiative contained issues for which we called. We certainly support this initiative. During the formulation, there may have been ambiguous words and sentences, which possibly had more than one meaning. We asked the Americans about these words and sentences. They gave us a satisfactory answer, and we told them that we accepted the initiative after Israel had rejected it. Of course, we definitely did not accept the initiative because Israel rejected it. We accepted it because we

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found something in it, even though we did not feel optimistic in light of past experiences.

Of course, it is well known that the Arabs and Israel have been enemies for a long time. Trust can only be maintained through work.

We had discussions with the U.S. team, and these were not easy. We, however, reached an agreement, and the Madrid Conference convened. We all heard the opening speeches in Madrid, particularly the speech by Shamir, the former Israeli prime minister. I believe that in that speech, he insulted all the conferees, particularly the big ones who were present at the time: the Soviet Union, the United States, and the representatives of Europe and the UN Security Council.

Unquestionably, the Conference was a very significant world event. It was relayed on television screens, and people all over the world were hearing and seeing its proceedings. I recall that Shamir spoke as if he were giving orders to everyone. He spoke about history as he sees it. He said we have been living on this land for thousands of years. Of course, history as he sees it is not true history at all. He also said that we Arabs have millions of square kilometers of land, while Israel has only 27,000 square kilometers.

[Nafi'] He meant that he wanted all the occupied territory?

[Al-Asad] Yes. He wanted all the occupied territory. Then there was a development, I mean moving the negotiations to Washington. There, the delegations began to work. The Arab delegations used to coordinate among themselves during the meetings, both on a daily and weekly basis, in accordance with the meetings. Also, there were meetings among the foreign ministers, including the Egyptian foreign minister, in the periods between one round of discussions and another. However, the Israeli representatives at the time of Shamir were speaking about something which had nothing to do with peace and which had no connection to the issue under discussion. This was explained by Shamir's statement — which was clear, regardless of whether he said that or not — that what is required is to see time elapse; that is, to gain time. They used to spend one full day, and I mean a session of talks, to discuss, for example, a report published in a certain newspaper. They would sometimes say that AL-THAWRAH in Syria said certain things. Of course, it was clear that this was some sort of provocation or disdain. Of course, the Syrian side would respond. The two sides would then argue angrily and then calm down. I mean the objective was clear.

[Nafi'] So the objective was to waste time?

[Al-Asad] Yes, indeed. Things changed, however, when the Labor Party came to power in Israel on a peace ticket during the elections. It is understood that the Labor Party won the elections on the platform of peace. In fact, peace was a popular thing, and both the Labor Party and the peace process itself were popular. I mean that both — the Labor Party and the concept of peace — were synonymous.

[Nafi'] Was this the case indeed?

[Al-Asad] A large-scale peace movement took place. Undoubtedly, the method changed. The new Israeli delegates were quiet, and it seemed that the delegations had impressions of one another. The atmosphere was quieter, and the discussions were also held quietly. But there was no progress at all. Of course the Arab side was unable to continue the difficult negotiations. A unilateral agreement was signed in Oslo, and another agreement with Jordan followed. These matters, however, are sensitive. The Israelis want to exploit these processes by pressuring the other parties. Oslo put pressure on Jordan, and Jordan and Palestine also put pressure on others. In fact, while holding negotiations, Syria does not take these matters into account at all. If there is a true and just peace process that gives each party its right, Syria will support such peace, whether with all the Arabs, half the Arabs, a fourth of the Arabs, or any number of them. I believe that all the Arab peoples and also all the good leaders will remain united. There is no doubt that due to some reasons or views of some sides that are certainly wrong, departure is sometimes possible. So, the Arabs had to be tested regarding their ability to endure pressures or regarding other things.

However, a nation's history, whether it is one state or different states, says that there are commitments taken for granted regardless of agreements and documents. By saying one nation, one language, one history, one aspiration, one past, we mean that there are commitments without charters. When I say the violation of or departure from these natural matters, I mean the natural commitments that accompanied the start of our existence as an Arab nation. I believe that judgment of any one who does this or those who support him will not be valid whether those who are judged live for some time or die.

Matters remained as they were here in Syria during the sessions, meetings, and situations regardless of the new circumstances. We are with the peace process but we do not support efforts to scoff at us. It is out of the question—no matter how things change or what the outcome may be—that we would do anything we do not believe in or that we do anything contradicting the pan-Arab interest, what we believe to be a pan-Arab interest,

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or what we view as just. If what we desire is provided, then there will be peace, otherwise our situation will not change.

[Nafi'] When will Syria agree to resume the negotiations, and on what basis?

[Al-Asad] There is something to this effect in what I have said.

[Nafi'] I mean that the negotiations on the level of the Syrian and Israeli chiefs of staff did not continue beyond a certain level. So, why did they stop, and how will they be resumed?

[Al-Asad] There was agreement on an agenda. In fact, the U.S. peace team, led by Christopher, discussed it with us. They had discussed it with the Israelis before us. It included a number of steps, such as the chiefs of staff meeting, then the experts role, and there is another step by some officials, whether on the foreign ministers level, or on the level of peace process coordinator Dennis Ross and others. I mean that there is a host of steps; I believe there are four or five. They should have ended at the end of last September. Before this, the two chiefs of staff met and failed. We said that the goal of the meeting was to get acquainted with each other, and we agreed to repeat it. Later, it was said that the Israeli chief of staff's service was almost over. This is why the next meeting was not held. It was said that the discussion with the new chief of staff would be different as he is new and enthusiastic about the peace process. At any rate, there were signs that the meeting would be useful. We agreed that the chiefs of staff should meet, then the experts, especially since it was unreasonable for the chiefs of staff to stay in Washington for a long time. They should put down the headlines and agree on them. For the remaining details, I mean the issues which should be implemented, we agreed that the experts should take care of them. I recall that our ambassador in Washington attended the session — he attends every session. When the Syrian delegation left for Washington, we asked the ambassador to convey a letter written in classical Arabic.

[Nafi'] Why in classical Arabic, especially since he is [the ambassador] a very good negotiator?

[Al-Asad, laughing] What you are saying is correct. However, we did not want our stand to be ambiguous. This has happened despite the fact that it is very natural and that the steps are interrelated. For example, I mean that if the two chiefs of staff do not meet, the experts' meeting will not be possible, for the experts' task is to stipulate the details of what the chiefs of staff agree on. Despite this, I said that there should be certain reasons which make me think that we should also stress this point to them. So, I thought that this letter should be sent to the U.S. side. It included that it should be understood that any of these steps on which we have agreed must not exceed the previous step. This is because the next step is linked to what is achieved by the first step.

[Nafi'] Does this mean that a subsequent step should be linked to the results of the previous step?

[Al-Asad] Yes. They left here and immediately communicated this to the coordinator of the peace process [Dennis Ross], who, in turn, was supposed to present it to Christopher. I do not know whether the message was communicated to a higher level. This was the basis on which we agreed that the chiefs of staff would meet, and they really met. The fact is that our chief of staff returned with the impression that an agreement was reached on security arrangements.

A discussion was then held on the issue of early warning stations. We were informed of this matter before this meeting and before discussing the agenda with us. I recall that during a meeting between the Syrian and Israeli ambassadors in Washington it was said that the issue of early warning stations should be discussed. I also recall that after we agreed here in Damascus on this matter and on the issue of the timetable of the steps, Christopher and the others were about to leave. Before leaving the room, I said to Ross: Listen, I heard about the issue of early warning stations. If they are thinking of early warning on the ground, the matter is out of the question even if the peace process collapses, because we do not want to replace an occupation by another. As for us, we do not want to see in our land any symbol of occupation. Of course, in this case, monitoring alternatives could be found, but not on the ground.

[Nafi'] Do you mean aerial monitoring, for example?

[Al-Asad] Yes, aerial. Christopher was in Washington at that time, but he did not meet with both chiefs of staff. The chiefs of staff held a meeting and discussed the issue. The Syrian chief of staff presented his viewpoint, saying: Aerial warning is more effective than ground warning. In all cases, the view was that this monitoring is needed by both parties. Of course, we are in agreement that all measures should be equal [mutasawiyah] for both parties. This matter, equality [al-tasawi], was discussed intensively. Not only Israel needs security arrangements, but the Arab side also needs these arrangements because Israel was almost always the aggressor. Therefore, security arrangements are an Arab and Israeli need. In any case, this matter was agreed upon during the talks, which were held before the meetings of both chiefs of staff. Had we not agreed on these principles in previous talks, the meeting of

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the chiefs of staff would not have been held. Aerial early warning was discussed in detail and was certainly convincing for those who want to be convinced. The issue of ground warning stations was also presented, and we were awaiting the results.

The chief of staff came out with the impression that there was an agreement. But, they did not agree at all, not even on the air warning. We informed them of this, I mean the U.S. party. They said that the Israelis told them that there was an agreement. We said: No, this is not true. We also said that no one calls for a meeting so that the conferees can look at each other and there are no meetings for the sake of meetings. This in itself is not needed. There are no two states, or several states in conflict with each other that meet only for the sake of meeting. There can be no agreement on the form without the substance.

[Nafi'] Do meetings have to reach results?

[Al-Asad] Yes. Results must be reached. Otherwise, the experts are called only experts. They are not decisionmakers. They have at their hands a decision which they have to complete, to complete certain needs, and then they consult with their leaders. Here, no decisions were taken. Nothing was decided between the two parties. The matter was mere reports, circulated by the media on the subject, which had no shadow of the truth. This was also some sort of abuse. We know the objective of these steps. They want to create an Arab and European, and even a world, climate to imply that the peace process is progressing and that meetings are being convened. I believe that the most important thing in this regard is the Arab condition — I mean the Arab citizen, who is expected to believe that meetings are being held and that everything is going well. This method, of course, has been applied for some time now, and we are aware of it. To prove this, I can say that four years have now elapsed, and we have not made a single step forward. However, there is always an opportunity to hold talks. I am certain that as an Arab citizen, you — as well as every Arab citizen and every citizen outside the Arab homeland who is following the subject — hear that there are meetings and that there is progress.

[Nafi'] Yes, after the meetings with you, we heard and read about tangible progress. It comes to our mind that there is a step forward.

[Al-Asad] In fact, several steps come to your mind. On the basis of such a talk, a specific agreement should be achieved in this peace process, peace deal, and so forth. In fact, the word progress did not give its true meaning. Maybe the atmosphere of discussions itself may sometimes be considered progress if such an atmosphere was appropriate, and it can be said there was progress. At any rate, in the official circumstances, of course, this means that the discussions were heated, and then they calmed down. This is good. Therefore, there was progress.

[Nafi'] Christopher has met with your Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. What were the results of the meeting, will Christopher come to the region, and if he comes, are we going to talk about progress?

[Al-Asad] No, the talk is part of the talk, and this is conceivable in all cases [sentence as heard]. At any rate, there has been an agreement as the minister [as heard] said, providing that the U.S. contacts resume with the Syrians and Israelis, and that efforts will continue to find a way to advance the peace process.

[Nafi'] Do you believe that the Israelis are ready to make big concessions during the negotiations at this particular time with the approaching date of the general Israeli elections, so that the Labor government can win these elections in the name of peace?

[Al-Asad] It is difficult to proceed from this concept. The peace process has been going on for four years. This is why when we ignore these four years and remember the present period only, it will favor others, and will not be in our interests. This is an ongoing action on their part. What they are doing now is not because they are in an election period. This was going on before the elections, and also two years ago. So, regarding the hopes we pin on the elections, positively or negatively [as heard], are not great. I believe that the achievement of peace will in itself be the true gain. However, from a personal or party viewpoint, it will be useful to the others in the ruling party in Israel. On the Arab side, this issue does not constitute an achievement for the party or other sides. However, for us, we proceed forward or stop based on the peace process itself.

[Nafi'] You mean the pan-Arab interests?

[Al-Asad] Yes, yes, this is the issue. If there would be circumstances to achieve a just and true peace before the elections, then we will support this peace. If these circumstances become available after the elections, we will also be for them, although, of course, we cannot have control over the circumstances of time, the world, and the people. We can only say that we can work after the elections more than now. We are working before the elections and we will work after them. The truth is that currently, there is nothing guaranteed, because there is nothing indicating anything positive.

[Nafi'] The same is being said about the U.S. elections. They say that Clinton also wants to accomplish peace to use it as a winning card in the presidential elections and that he will exercise some pressure. Is this possible?

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[Al-Asad] During my meetings with him and my contacts with him through other channels, I sensed that President Clinton actually wants peace, just peace, and that he has been exerting efforts for that purpose. In fact, I am not flattering him. Relations between us and them are not normal. There are obstacles to the peace process. The other side has certain forces that we do not have. The circumstances of the United States and its institutions do not help in advancing the peace process. Consequently, the way is not paved for some U.S. decisionmakers regarding the peace process in the speed they want.

[Nafi'] There was contact between your excellency and Clinton more than a week ago. Was it for advancing the peace process?

[Al-Asad] In fact, all contacts were held on the peace process, and the peace process has always been the major issue.

[Nafi'] Will Syria take part in the Amman economic summit, and how, in your opinion, can the Arabs defend their economic interests within the idea of the Middle East framework?

[Al-Asad] I believe that they want a dark future for us. This does not mean it will be so. I mean the future others want for us. I believe that the long-term goal of the others is to cancel what is called the Arabs, what is called Arabism, and of course, the Arabs. Nobody should understand that canceling the Arabs, I mean killing them or chopping their heads off. By canceling, I do not mean this. I mean canceling our feelings as a nation, canceling the Arab feelings, canceling the pan-Arab identity and the spiritual identity, if we can put it this way. Of course, if these are canceled I do not know how this Arab nation will appear and if it will remain as an entity. I wonder about this nation in the far Arab future, and what its values and role at present and in the future will be. Even if we say we will be there, we will not exist as Arabs because if we dissolve as Arabs and abandon all that links us to our history, it will be difficult for us, even if we are torn apart, to be pan-Arab shreds.

This is the objective they are seeking. Therefore, what about the Middle East? Why is the Middle East being established? The Middle East does exist. The strange thing is that the Middle East is being presented as an alternative to Arabism. The Middle East is an undefined geographical term. Arabism, however, is blood; Arabism is history; Arabism is the great nation which is like a family — you, your brother, your father, and your mother, etc. This is national affiliation in general. How can we link this to that? Then, how can a geographical term cancel a genuine, national, historic affiliation, which is neither fabricated nor compound? The Arabs are a nation whose ties are more than any other people in this world, more than any other nation in this world, in fact, more than nations which only had hostile ties in the past and which are now united.

Therefore, the first step is the Middle East, Middle Easternism [al-sharq awsatiyah]. We, as Arabs, certainly reject this because this is not in the hands of individuals. Arabism is not a commodity to trade in even though this is what the others seek. This is how I am, this is how you are, and this is how our birth was. It was neither made nor fabricated. I believe that every Arab individual should not be worried and should confront those whose values and determination have weakened. We cannot allow anybody to tamper with our sanctities. These are the real sanctities, because without them there are no sanctities or anything to hold on to.

[Nafi'] Mr. President, Middle Easternism could mean economic cooperation, not canceling the concept of Arabism and Arab nationalism. Will it be accepted if it is only an economic cooperation which serves the Middle East as a whole?

[Al-Asad] I believe we should not explain this matter in this way because what is being presented would not be accepted even if we were children with a minimum level of reason. The matter does not require exceptional talent, genius, nor extraordinary understanding of things. Presenting this matter means torpedoing the Arab League. As I understood, lectures to this effect were given and some of them were given in Cairo itself. Regrettably, I did not read these lectures, but we heard about their contents. These lectures say that the Arabs, Arabs [preceding word in English] are no more than this. This is very serious evidence. Nobody can ignore this evidence at all. No force, no age, and no time can achieve these objectives, the objectives of others, or, we might say, this Middle Easternism in this meaning. In any case, if Middle Easternism means an economic issue it will turn into treaties between Middle East countries, including Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan. Is this what is meant by Middle Easternism? These are Middle East countries.

[Nafi'] Do you mean this will be a containment of the Arab nation?

[Al-Asad] Yes. It is a containment of the Arab nation. The objective is, of course, containment. Therefore, these attempts and maneuvers should not deceive any Arab citizen, regardless of his position.

[Nafi'] Is this the reason you are not going to attend the Amman economic summit?

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[Al-Asad] No. As you know, in general, we believe that such conferences are generally worthless, and they constitute an attempt to normalize relations before achieving peace. This is the minimal level of what is required, and it is part of the others' view of this future which I have mentioned. However, the direct objective is to achieve normalization without achieving peace. They think they can pressure those who did not normalize relations, and therefore, we will not attend [the Amman summit]. It is one of the several forms of normalization. You also know that we had a position on multilateral negotiations, even before the Madrid Conference. This position is documented.

[Nafi'] But naturally if Syria arrives at a peace agreement with Israel, it will not object to attending multilateral talks, especially over issues such as water, security, and henceforth, because it is not far from this. There is a state of tension. I believe this is true. Is this not the case?

[Al-Asad] The question of Middle Easternism is not an economic one. Naturally, it is an economic question from Israel's viewpoint. It is, rather, an economic and political subject. It will organize economics in such a way that will make the road more open to all the enemies.

[Nafi'] Syria is the gateway to both Jordan and Iraq. Its relations with Amman and Baghdad are influenced by the developments in both of them. Do you feel that Jordanian-Iraqi relations will remain as they have always been? Or, is there an invisible estrangement emerging now which may affect Syria in view of its important position in the Arab East?

[Al-Asad] Of course, nothing can be seen on the surface. However, the logic of things says that it is very difficult to imagine that what has happened will not have any effects. The case here is relatively complicated, and things may stay the way they are for some time.

[Nafi'] Do you mean between Jordan and Iraq?

[Al-Asad] It may take some time. The possibility is not very strong. However, what is in the hearts is certainly different. Easily, any two of us can imagine the same situation.

[Nafi'] It is said that there is—let us call it estrangement—between Jordan and Syria. What are the reasons, what can be done at present, and is the word estrangement enough, or is there a different story?

[Al-Asad] No, truly, it is estrangement. We do not have these feelings. We have the feelings that tell us that some Arab brothers are not right. Certainly, they are not right, and they are gambling with what they believe, or with what we believe, their interests, basic interests. They are proceeding against these interests completely. In my opinion, the sight with which they measure their steps is very short. As you see, of course, we have decided that we cannot change what had happened. This is impossible. However, we have also decided not to wage battles among us. This is because this is actually in the interest of those who plan for our misery, if we can say this. At any rate, everyone observes, and you observe too, that those who do this are on one side while their peoples, to a large extent, are on the other.

[Nafi'] Is it possible that the relations will go back to normal soon?

[Al-Asad] There are no hostilities or a state of war between us.

[Nafi'] Do you exchange visits or contacts?

[Al-Asad] The ministers meet with their counterparts at the Arab League and the United Nations. This is what we have between us. There is no problem between us and the Jordanian people.

[Nafi'] Is trade proceeding as usual?

[Al-Asad] I believe that we did not take any measure which would obstruct this.

[Nafi'] It is noted that the Iraqi officials currently speak about Syria positively. Some officials quoted Tariq 'Aziz as saying that Baghdad is ready to give Syria what it wants, and that it is ready to forget the past differences with it and to turn a new leaf based on good neighborliness and mutual interests. What is your comment on this?

[Al-Asad] Of course, it is known that we have differences. This is really regrettable between two fraternal and neighboring Arab states. There have actually been attempts to overcome the estrangement and the existing differences, but we did not succeed. I always believe that any Arab state should make such attempts. All sides and officials in these states are responsible for negligence. This applies to us, to Iraq, to Egypt, and to every Arab state. Regrettably, there are many differences. However, efforts should always be exerted to heal the rift. This has rarely succeeded. Despite this, despair must not enthrall us.

Regarding Iraq or Jordan, we cannot ignore any Arab country when a dark future is prepared for us, including Syria, Egypt, Iraq, the Gulf, and Morocco. But it is not logical for me to view the matter from the Syrian angle because when these countries are eaten up, Syria will also be eaten up. Hence, we take our overall

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position on the Arab situation. Attempts to partition Iraq are known. We, however, called a meeting of the neighboring countries after some features of these intentions clarified. We invited Iran and Turkey and we agreed to maintain Iraq's unity and to oppose partition. I talked to President Husni Mubarak about this issue several times. We are no longer satisfied with what is taking place.

As officials in our countries, we always disagree, but we should not or we are not allowed to tolerate any attempt to create a loophole through our contradicting positions in order to cancel a country or partition another. This is serious. Syria is not my property. I rule for some time, and then I will go away. Egypt is not the property of President Mubarak and was not the property of 'Abd-al-Nasir or al-Sadat. Similarly, Iraq is not Saddam's property. Public issues should not in any way be linked to disagreement. Our position on this issue is known. We opposed Iraq's leadership when it invaded Kuwait. Kuwait is also an Arab country, and there were no justifications for the invasion. When we took that position, our relations with Kuwait or with the brother officials in Kuwait were not at their best. But the pan-Arab interest is what counts and we should abide by it. We saw the results of what took place in Kuwait, Iraq, and the Arab nation. Every Arab has sustained material or moral damage from what is taking place.

Therefore, we should not hesitate to act if an Arab country is endangered, even if we do not support it. We should take a position against major threats to the people. This is what took place during our meeting in Cairo. We do not want to challenge anybody, but our position and our rejection of what is taking place should be understood.

[Nafi'] Your Excellency, you can see there is an Arab consensus on the need to tackle the negative Arab situation. In your opinion, what can be done at least at this stage to restore enough solidarity to face the existing challenges?

[Al-Asad] Without speaking about theories, the people are led by human beings. Some, if not all, the leaders of this nation should have enough capability to unite their views and to continue their efforts until we overcome the current situation — the situation which depicts the Arabs as if they are in a state of weakness or dormancy. This does not mean that we do not have problems between us. We really have minor and major problems. However, I say again and I will not be bored by repeating this — all of us should repeat these meanings: Nobody is safe. What shall I gain from becoming a bitter enemy who rejects any reconciliation with a country in the Maghreb or with a neighborly country, for example, with whom I have differences? However, we must guarantee first that priority must be given to the common destiny and to the common destiny of the Arab nation. If we ensure and safeguard this destiny we will then discuss the issues which are between us, we will discuss these issues, condemn the one who must be condemned, and praise the one who must be praised. We will point out what is right and what is falsehood. We must not forget or ignore what is more dangerous when seeing the less dangerous, that is, if we assume there is danger. When we avert dangers we can easily tackle the lesser dangers or mistakes. The contrary, however, will not work. Therefore, efforts must be exerted. Syria is always ready to take part in and to lead such efforts, hoping that all our Arab brothers will contribute to these efforts.

[Nafi'] Syria proposed referring the draft of the Arab security and regional cooperation Code of Honor, which was presented to the Arab League, to the Arab summit. However, in light of the difficulty in convening the summit because of the lack of conditions, what could be done to address the draft which tackles new issues to which Arab security has not been exposed before?

[Al-Asad] Of course, we did not discuss this matter when I met President Husni Mubark because it was not presented for discussion between us.

[Nafi'] It was presented to the Arab League?

[Al-Asad] I believe that any presented code, no matter how far the objectives are and how clear the meanings are, must not conflict at all with what exists. I believe that in light of the existing charters in the Arab League and between the Arab countries, we can present ideas that will affect the existing treaties and agreements which are valid in the Arab League. It is really inappropriate. I would like say this: Such initiatives are inappropriate for the interests of the Arabs because they must be in a climate which is different from the current one. This climate is absolutely inappropriate to propose charters which will replace, if accepted by the Arabs, the existing ones. Of course, what is being presented cannot replace what is represented by the existing ones. Also, we do not need this, because it will not solve the problem. I am not saying that this, in principle, is incorrect. I am saying that this is not presented in the suitable time. We need to nurse wounds, not to open new wounds. What I am saying is clear for those who want to understand. The important thing is that we should search for factors of unity, not fragmentation, and we should care for the small and big. None should be ignored or can be ignored. We should listen to our views and voices with a fraternal spirit. As I said, I only heard about the Code of Honor when it was presented

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at the Arab League. I asked the foreign minister: When was this charter presented? He told me: It was presented at the Foreign Ministers' conference. I mean our heads are not preoccupied with this issue, we have 50 disasters in every country and between one country and another. I am sure if my discussion with President Mubarak dealt with this matter we would have agreed on it. We usually agree on all issues. I mean that we always agreed on what we discussed. We do not differ on anything, and when there is a difference between us it was never on the essence. When we discuss things we say: This is beneficial and this is detrimental. I always believe that consultation is necessary.

Shura [consultation] in its true meaning is necessary. No one can see everything correctly. However, cooperation and consultation among people make things clearer to all sides. Of course, I do not consider this a topic for discussion between me and President Mubarak, but I meant that I wish, especially since it is your proposal, that there will be an agreement on this. I am sure about President Husni Mubarak. I tell you that I have not read it yet, because it was proposed at the Arab League, and I heard it from the Arab League because Faruq al-Shar' briefed me on it.

[Nafi'] Is this a question which is related to all Arab issues, and not only to President Mubarak or other Arab leaders?

[Al-Asad] Of course. This is why I will not forget, God willing, to discuss it with the president when we meet. There will be many meetings between us, God willing.

[Nafi'] How do you view the possibility of putting the Lebanese house in order? Throughout many days, here in Damascus, I have read all newspapers. The banner headlines were about the Lebanese situation and the renewal of the president's term in office. Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri and other Lebanese officials come here and meet with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, and the chairman of the Chamber of Deputies come as well. There is also much talk about communities in a way which made me feel the return of the sectarian discrimination to Lebanon?

[Al-Asad] In any case, it is true that what is taking place in Lebanon takes place in any state. There are interpretations and opinions. As you know, Lebanon is a country which has just emerged from a difficult situation, but there is a unified army, institutions, and a president who has a role in accordance with the constitution. There is also the government and the Chamber of Deputies. However, there are interpretations by the various institutions. There are differences. As for Syria, its role is based on the fact that they are all our friends and brothers. In fact, we are trying to unite them. They are all patriots and each of them has played his role. We are doing our best so that none of them loses the other, that we do not lose anyone of them, and that they do not lose anyone in Syria of those who deal with them. I believe that differences in opinion among them are not big. They are not that important to lead to big problems. I believe that they will reach an agreement. Relations among them are really good, and each one of them considers the other necessary and says this. Despite this, each one has his opinion about a certain issue. In general, as I said, all sides are for the renewal of the mandate of the president of the republic, the chairman of the chamber of deputies, and the prime minister. The truth is that the president of the republic is the one meant by the renewal of mandate. There are efforts and contacts which did not reach an end. There are interpretations and a formula for a solution, considering that the discussion of any issues among brothers differ from the negotiations we know of. I believe that things are proceeding well and the country is alright. It is natural that those who do not like this situation wish that the worse could happen.

[Nafi'] But there is no room, in my view, for fragmentation?

[Al-Asad] There is no such room, God willing.

[Nafi'] Mr. President: You and President Mubarak were comrades- in-arms, you served in the military, and you are now political leaders of the two most important Arab countries. How does this affect coordination between the two fraternal countries?

[Al-Asad] I said several times, President Mubarak is a colleague and a friend. There was no bad circumstances between me and him at any time, even when there was estrangement between the two countries. I did not see President Mubarak before relations between the two countries were restored. However, I declared many times that we maintained good relations.

[Nafi'] How does this affect the basic issues of the nation and current dialogue on them?

[Al-Asad] We had what we can call periodic meetings. Of course they were not regular. We, however, used to hold more than one meeting a year. This is in addition to phone calls and the movements of the foreign ministers and the ministerial committees. Many other contacts also took place between the two countries. There is no doubt that obstacles certainly exist between the two countries. But there is a perpetual cooperation, and through patience, we will overcome these obstacles. Our relations, however, are very good, and I believe that the continuation of such relations is not only in the interest

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of Syria and Egypt, but also in the interest of the whole Arab nation.

[Nafi'] Syria has recently witnessed economic, political, and investment openness. To what extent has this reflected on democracy, development, and attracting Arab and foreign investment to the country?

[Al-Asad] Our national trend is different from the previous one, even in our discussions with the Arabs. There is no one type of democracy that can be spread to the world. Each country is ruled in accordance with its own circumstances, including the economic and cultural situations, and in accordance with the degrees of development as there is no harmony between the stages of development. I mean there is economic, political, and other development. If there is no harmony between the two matters, there will be no democracy that is in line with the interest of the people.

I believe that democracy is harmony or congruity between the stages of development, in its various dimensions and ramifications. It is the democratic formula under which the people should live. Based on this, we came to a realization between 1966 and 1970; we passed through certain circumstances. We do not say that they were completely wrong, because every stage has its mistakes. However, they were difficult years. This saying is not completely wrong. There is a state of affairs, and there is a need on the other side. A difficult situation could have been in a way in which people could not tell that it was a difficult situation. However, this was at a certain stage. In 1970, we liberated many things. During the first days, we opened the doors for all Syrians abroad. There were thousands who could not return for many years. Some of them, we know, did not know how to betray their homeland. Some of them had contributed to acts of violence in our country. Despite this, we won many thousands of the people, and some of them remained as they were. Some of them were isolated, and others perpetrated criminal acts. Some of them were punished, and some others escaped. Regarding monitoring and the security circumstances, we instructed all organs not to arrest anyone except through the police who refer people to justice. Of course, there are ordinary incidents in every state, but here I mean for political reasons. I followed up this issue by myself. The security organs investigate and monitor when there is a serious threat against the country. When something reaches the point of danger, then certain measures might be taken, and people are referred to justice and are punished in accordance with the law. On 7 March, there are celebrations on the 8 March 1972 [as heard] Revolution. We have directly announced an action for understanding among all parties in Syria. There has been conflict among the parties for different reasons. There are the Ba'thists, the nationalists, the Nasirites, and the socialist communists. There are various parties. We are aware of the existence of these parties, and we know much about the members of these parties. These parties are not recognized. We rule through the leadership and the Council of Ministers. I proposed this at a congress before 1970, and I said that we should establish a national front which includes all the people who are at least united by a broad nationalist line. There were contradictions and conflicts. Each party, even if it has the same ideology, has its own way of action, and has its opinion about issues or about each of the national stations, if we can say this. It might have an opinion about every national issue that is different from the other party.

I followed up these issues personally. Contacts were made with all parties and we agreed to form a committee from the leadership of these parties. Each party can nominate one or two whose task is to follow up the work of this committee. We wanted to reach an agreement on the general policies of the country — domestic and foreign policies. These discussions, which continued for one whole year, were intensive. Political and party leaders served as representatives on this committee to which we gave instructions and from which we received reports. On 7 March 1972, we were able to reach complete agreement on the general outlines of the domestic and foreign policies. While we were signing this at the Republican Palace, we heard explosions. Of course, there are always people who are harmed by right things. It is an external operation. The important thing is that, one day before the revolution, 7 March, we announced the charter. There was an agreement on the policies. We formed the leadership and we called it the Central Command which holds continuous meetings. It might not be perfectly organized. I mean continuous meetings and nobody feels there is discontinuity. In fact, the committee's task is to discuss any matter. Each party has a secretary general, a political bureau, and two [representatives]. And each party holds discussions and makes decisions. The fact is that once we formed a committee all the parties were represented. So, we can say that from the beginning of 1971 the climate in the country changed. We can also say that the front practically existed beginning in the 1970's. However, when we signed the charter in 1972 we also formed a Central Command, as I said, and a secondary leadership from these parties in every Syrian governorate. When problems erupt in a governorate, we send political instructions from here. Of course, there are detailed matters pertaining to authority affairs, but in general they represent the political authority in the governorate. Of course, they are in continuous contact with the Central Command, the central authority. We continued with this formula and we were united during the wars

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which we waged. Also, we were united during the aggressions against us. And when various types of pressure were imposed on us, our stand was united. I do not want to say that this front is an alternative to all the people — no. This front is an organized body in the country. We developed the front and the ideas were discussed within the framework of proposals.

Besides parties, we have the popular organizations. All these organizations make their decisions in consultation with each other. Naturally, there is a party presence inside the organizations. The organizations are also present inside the parties. The workers, for example, are present in parties and in these organizations. The workers, students, and other leaders are also represented in the ruling party front.

You can notice that there is no contradiction in the interests of any party leader and any head of a popular organization. It is true that the head of the Peasants Union pays attention to the issues that concern peasants, but when he sees a serious political aspect to a certain question, he also discusses it on a political level.

As you know, these organizations have their own organizational echelons, in accordance with the organizations of the front as a whole. It was necessary to establish such popular organizations because every citizen has a distinct character and mood. He may not prefer party action. Therefore, we provided him with the opportunity to get involved in these organizations so that he can play his role, but in an organized manner. This experience widely opened the doors for several people, especially since we established local elected committees which truly, and freely, exercise power in every neighborhood. We did not want to impose a custodianship on anyone.

Regarding the general elections, the parties used them in the past to agree among themselves on the candidates, and then add to them a number of independents. However, after several years of experience, we did not like this arrangement because we felt there was a sort of monopoly, which was unintended of course, and that each party was trying to win everything. We said it is possible to improve this experience. So, we agreed that in any election, there should be a percentage of independents in every list, which would vary from one governorate to another. This arrangement should apply not only in legislative elections, but also in the local government elections.

Also from experience, we felt there was a need to open more room for the independents and to create competition between the party- affiliated individuals and the independents so that we could get the best and most active elements. This meant we had to limit the role of the front. We said that the front should, for example, nominate a number of candidates less than the number of deputies allotted for a specific governorate. We also said that the party members were free to support one candidate or another. This development was received very well by the citizens.

When we noticed that there was a clash among parties in terms of supporting candidates and that some party members broke with their parties and stood for elections as independents, we rejected this and said that whoever runs for elections as an independent while he is a member of a certain party will be dismissed from that party. If he wanted to run for elections as an independent, he should submit an application in this regard prior to elections. At any rate, we continued to adopt this formula, that is, narrowing the front and expanding the range of competition.

Now, the number of members in the People's Assembly, the Parliament, who are not members of parties is more than one third. There is real competition among people. Of Course, the front can win the majority, given its history and strength as a party. However, we agreed to give way to others to undertake their national role. The same applies to women who became entitled to participation. This is the political formula of our democracy. We seek the formula desired by the citizens and we do not adhere to a certain perspective or impose a certain perspective that may suit only some.

In general, issues of democracy and human rights are not newly born. However, we must admit that international changes have given these concepts new perspectives. Responding to criticism from the West, I once said that it is true that democracy is the rule of people. However, there is another kind of democracy, that is, international democracy — cooperation among countries. It is unreasonable that democracy in a certain country is implemented in undemocratic ways vis-a-vis others. Why do some European countries seek to impose on the Third World a certain type of democracy. At any rate, we in Syria are implementing a good formula. Whoever wants to verify this statement may listen to the debates of the Syrian People's Assembly, the Parliament. I always advise our parliamentarians not to be wholly engaged in debating laws, but rather to look for laws which may last for many years in the interest of the present and future generations, or else there is no need for the presence of establishments.

[Nafi'] I have noticed that the Syrian brothers have embarked on a dynamic investment effort. There are many projects and a massive construction effort under way. Would you shed light on the economic formula as you have just spoken on the political formula?

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[Al-Asad] Since the inception of the Corrective Movement, we have been modernizing our economic march. It goes without saying that I am a socialist. Nonetheless, socialism should not be viewed as a rigid dogma. We must recognize the diversity of people's capabilities.

[Nafi'] You do not overlook individual incentive.

[Al-Asad] That is right. We were convinced of this. Nonetheless, the private sector's efforts were cautious at the time because of political instability, the impact of the French colonial rule, and partisan differences, etcetera. With time, the political state of affairs has firmed up and disputes among parties have completely vanished. In spite of this, we noticed that the private sector remained concerned. I recall that Syrian merchants were happy with the Corrective Movement, whereas it was the workers who were adversely influenced. I sat with the two several times, and affirmed to all that the government cannot serve a certain sector to the detriment of the others. I told the rich that if tension and hatred among the populace remained, a catastrophe would also hit them too. I added that each party ought to continue with its work and field of activity, that there ought to be a convergence of views, and that dialogue ought to be used. This tension is no longer there, not at all. In the past, it was a taboo for representatives of merchants to sit with government officials to discuss economic issues. At present, the opposite is quite true. Many meetings are held between the two, and joint decisions are made. There are no longer any sensitivities between various sectors of the community. Sometimes, some merchants commit violations. They are punished by law just as the law punishes factory workers whose performance is reproachable.

Let us recall some incidents to know how our economic methods have progressed. For example, I recall having met with the late President Anwar al-Sadat and Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi at the Umayyah Hotel, where we spent the night. I observed that the hotel's condition was unsatisfactory, even though we encouraged businessmen to build hotels and care for them. I consistently heard the complaints of businessmen about red tape. When I asked the responsible ministers about this, they answered that they took certain measures to facilitate the work of businessmen. Nonetheless, the problems lay with employees. With time, we modernized the agricultural and industrial legislations. We argued that as long as we had political pluralism, we ought to have economic pluralism. Hence, we have a public sector, a mixed sector, and a private sector in Syria. The government encourages the three sectors, and blesses their endeavors. This is an opportunity for competition. Each sector must seek to increase its production. We said that the rights of the three sectors are guaranteed, and that the rewards of each sector will be proportionate to its production. But we reiterated that the public sector is the basic sector.

[Nafi'] We used to pin great hopes on the Damascus Declaration. However, we noticed that the positive implementation of the Declaration faced some obstacles. Is it still possible to implement this Declaration practically?

[Al-Asad] It can be implemented if the member parties really want that. Surely, we always seek good for all the parties to the Damascus Declaration grouping. I believe things could have been better. Nevertheless, there is always a possibility of launching a dialogue on this issue. We will try to achieve something that will serve the parties' interests through dialogue and debate. In fact, this issue was discussed in the past by the Syrian and Egyptian foreign ministers who exerted efforts and proposed ideas on the charter's implementation. However, we will see what we can do in light of the circumstances. I assert that it is in the interest of all the member parties that this Declaration takes its place. Yes, it is in the interest of all. There is no single party that only gives and another party that only takes. Everybody will give and take if there is proper implementation. Moreover, this Declaration will serve the interests of the Arab nation, that is, countries that are not members of this declaration.

[Nafi'] What is your vision of the future political situation in Iraq?

[Al-Asad] An answer to this question is very complicated. However, what I can say is that the situation in Iraq is undoubtedly dismal. As you know, we host in Syria hundreds of thousands of Iraqi brothers, some of whom oppose [the Iraqi regime] and others do not. Some of them came here not for political reasons but due to the economic conditions in Iraq. Iraq is entirely paralyzed. Certainly, we hope international resolutions will be implemented. No matter how uncomfortable these resolutions are for the Iraqi leadership, they will lead to a better situation for the Iraqi people. This means that implementing these resolutions is better for Iraq and the Arab nation. If matters were addressed seriously by the Iraqi leadership, results could be better and the suffering of the Iraqi people would be terminated with the passage of time. Of course, it is difficult to say that predicting this matter in light of the parties' positions will lead to good results. It is difficult to make predictions or say a certain thing will happen for sure. These are mere possibilities.

[Nafi'] What do you think of King Husayn's latest moves which, rumors say, seek to restore the Hashemite throne in Baghdad?

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[Al-Asad] At any rate, it is a problem. In this case, many things in the Arab world must change. Is it not so? I believe that any development in any country should be done according to a decision by the people of that country. That is the right decision. Decisions that come from outside the country have only limited chance for success. It must be noted that we support Arab unity. But this is something else. Realizing Arab unity should be our objective, no matter how long it takes, but on the basis of a mutual will, understanding, and interests.

[Nafi'] What is Syria's vision of a concerted Arab position toward the problem of water in the Arab region, especially since Syria's position is extremely important on this problem which will become a severe one in the near future?

[Al-Asad] This a significant problem for all Arabs, because in the Arab region, or let us say in the Middle East region, Arabs are targeted in this respect more than any other party. Basically, there should be Arab solidarity. Arab rights should not be violated in any way. This is a decisive matter and does not afford any bargaining or reluctance. We do not doubt our capabilities, as Arabs, in preserving our rights. Of course, in every matter we are inspired by the need not to stage aggression against any party. If we have partners, then let us discuss partnership in a fair manner. We will stop at nothing to prevent any usurpation of rights. Therefore, I always say, right from the inception, that the great issues should not be eclipsed by minor issues. We must not forget the basic issues, especially at this historic stage which has certain characteristics. People in the past used to be more secure. But now, all the windows are open and all possibilities are imminent. The situation is developing with the passage of time. The weak at this stage have no rights — the weak here does not mean those who do not have much weapons. I believe that the will of people is the real strength. What matters is that this will should emanate from a lofty popular stand. I am confident that the Arab masses have such a will.

[Nafi'] On the Lebanese question, some think that an amendment to one or two paragraph in the Constitution is necessary. What is your comment on this?

[Al-Asad] Some who work in high offices in Lebanon, such as the judiciary and the Central Bank, agree that nobody should benefit from the elections, be they presidential or otherwise, by exploiting his powers or the position he occupies. In other words, they should not exploit their powers and their positions to win the election. In my opinion, this is an ideal process in principle so that equal opportunities should be given to people. Nobody can find fault in it.

Moreover, in accordance with the al-Ta'if agreement, high-level officials cannot run for office before they spend at least two years out of office. In principle, and in my opinion, this is correct. However, such things cover only a limited number of people—50 or 60 individuals. This question is related to a paragraph which some want to amend. The other paragraph is connected with the President of the Republic; namely, the extension of the presidential term. Therefore, some want to change the two paragraphs, saying that if amendments are required concerning the prevention of exploiting one's office in the election, then the extension for the president requires an amendment to the paragraph on the president in the constitution.

However, these issues are not basic in my opinion. I do not think it is very important to begin a discussion on amending one or two paragraphs.

[Nafi'] Last question. Why don't they want to hold presidential elections?

[Al-Asad] Because they have buttressed conditions created by the al-Ta'if agreement. We also must take into consideration the fact that nobody can judge Lebanon's current conditions without taking into account the 16-year war, because such judgment would not be objective. This has continued because by nature the government includes a mixture of professional politicians who had roles in the civil war and who have accepted the al-Ta'if agreement. Some have not accepted the al-Ta'if agreement because they have outside links. It should also be noted that the war in the south is continuing. Such things require stability.

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Afghanistan

UN Envoy Mestiri To Continue Peace Mission

LD1110210295 Tehran IRNA in English 2044 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Oct. 11, IRNA — Mahmoud Mestiri, United Nations special envoy for Afghanistan, is continuing his mission to restore peace and tranquility in the war-battered Afghanistan, a UN spokesman said.

Dr. Sadigh Abu Nafeesa talking to IRNA Wednesday [11 October] said that Mestiri after his four-day stay in Kabul, Mazar Sharif and Maydan Shahr, has returned to Islamabad.

Replying to a question he said that all warring factions in Kabul agreed to Mestiri's 10-day ceasefire plan but with certain conditions.

Taleban leaders had strictly opposed Mestiri's ceacefire proposal. The print media and analysts viewed that Taleban was the main hurdle in making the UN peace mission a success.

The source said that Mestiri was not disappointed of the situation and will carry on his mission to bring the Afghan groups at the negotiation table.

The spolesman did not see any justification of Mestiri's remaining in Afghanistan while rockets and bullets were showering over the cities.

He said though Mestiri has no recent plan to visit Kabul but he will be ready to perform his responsibility at any time needed. He added that Mestiri may also visit Tehran again if the need arises.

Peace Proposals Presented to President Rabbani

LD1110205895 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At a meeting with the esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, the national reconciliation commission presented its suggestions and proposals to the president. The commission assessed the results of their visit to the north [referring to Mazar-e Sharif, Dostam's headquarters] as successful.

This commission, consisting of Kabul University lecturers, scholars from the academy of science, and informed people, is working to bring understanding between the opposition and the government. During their recent visit to the north, the commission presented their proposals regarding cease-fire, opening of the highways, and creating understanding and cooperation, to the officials in this province.

In presenting the proposals, the members of the commission said to the esteemed president that the officials in the north, in expressing appreciation for the efforts of the commission, have given assurance that all forces must set aside their differences and act on a united front for the defense of their country's freedom and independence, especially under the circumstance where we see foreign interference in our country. To achieve this goal, the first step is cease-fire. [Passage indistinct]

In welcoming the national reconciliation commission's efforts, Rabbani said Afghanistan is ready to hold talks with all sides. The Muslim people of Afghanistan have been always united when facing crisis and foreign aggression. Now that foreign aggression has been launched against our country, the time has come so that all forces take a joint action. Afghanistan supports peace-seeking efforts and cooperation. [passage omitted]

A member of the reconciliation commission said to BAKHTAR that the delegation is due to travel to the eastern and southern regions and to meet and present their proposals to the officials in these provinces.

Envoy in Iran Warns Taleban Against Kabul Attack

LD0810193795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 8 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Reports reaching here from Afghanistan say that the formation of an anti-Rabbani government coalition of the Taleban and the High Coordination Council is under way. In an interview with Iran's radio and television external services news unit, Mr Khayrkhwah, Afghan ambassador to Tehran, said: Any aggressor who is intending to attack the city will be defeated because the people of Kabul have made full preparations against the opponents' attack. The Afghan ambassador in Iran welcomed Mr. Mestiri's cease-fire proposal and said: The Kabul government has always supported peace, calm, and the cessation of fighting. Only the government's opponents speak about fighting. The Afghan official expressed the hope that Mr. Mestiri will take positive steps to ensure peace and to put an end to fighting in Afghanistan. He said: If the opponents of the Rabbani government announce unconditional readiness for a cease-fire, the Afghan government will positively respond to their demand.

Mr. Khayrkhwah denied reports about the arrest of foreign Muslim citizens, who participated in the fighting against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and called the reports baseless.

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Taleban Attacks Near Kabul; Government Responds

Captures Positions Near Chahar Asiab

LD1110140295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A spokesman for the Taleban claimed their forces attacked government positions south of Kabul last night, and succeeded in capturing some positions around Chahar Asiab. Mofti Masum Afghani told IRNA this morning that during the fighting the Taleban group inflicted heavy losses on the government forces and bombarded their positions with artillery. The spokesman added: Yesterday too fighting occurred between the two sides in Paghman, 25 km west of Kabul. The fighting is still continuing.

Another report says that the government forces have deployed military equipment including medium range rockets around Kabul as a measure to defend the city. Sources in Islamabad say that the latter has deployed Luna rockets with a range of 130 km in a number of areas around Kabul. Today an informed Afghan source said: Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, the Afghan government military commander, has established seven security belts around Kabul.

Rabbani Troops Ready To Counterattack

BK1110120095 Hong Kong AFP in English 1137 GMT 11 Oct 95

[By Terrence White]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KABUL, Oct 11 (AFP) — Afghanistan's Taleban Islamic militia, who control the south of the country, are poised for an attack on Kabul after capturing the nearby strategic town of Chahar Asiab overnight Tuesday [10 October]-Wednesday.

Chahar Asiab, 25 kilometers (16 miles) south of Kabul, was taken by the Taleban militia in a surprise lighting assault Tuesday night, military officials here confirmed.

The defense ministry in Kabul said troops loyal to Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani were preparing for a counter-attack, but it did not indicate when that would be.

"Of course we have a plan to launch a counterattack," infantry division commander General Baba Jan told AFP.

The Taleban advance looks stragetically significant on two counts — firstly Kabul is again within rocket range and an attack on the capital, the avowed aim of the student-led force, has been made easier.

In March, the student-led militia was pushed away from Kabul by Rabbani's forces under the command of his military strongman, Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, a former defense minister.

A diplomat in neighbouring Pakistan said the recapture of the key town by the Islamic militia "is a very dangers development" for the Kabul regime, which is also opposed by the northern Uzbek militia of General 'Abdol Rashid Dostan.

For several weeks the Taleban movement has issued clear warnings that it will attack Kabul if Rabbani, whose mandate expired in December, does not step down.

Composed mainly of Pushtun Afghans, the Taleban movement, which emerged in November last year, has never accepted the hold on Kabul of Rabbani and Mas'ud, who come from the ethnic Tajik community.

Baba Jan, an ex-communist regime officer who surrendered to the mojahedin before the 1992 fall of Kabul, was seen inspecting the frontlines near Chehelsitoon Palace in the south of the capital.

There was no fighting or shelling in this part of Kabul, and Baba Jan said that the adjacent Khairabad Hills and Rishkor army base were still in pro-Rabbani hands.

Baba Jan, confirming the loss of Chahar Asiab, said fighting was now in a gorge some 20 kilometres (12 miles) south of Kabul on the road to Chahar Asiab.

Earlier in the morning south Kabul came under a rocket bombardment by the Taleban, according to pro-Rabbani troops stationed in Darulaman Palace, a little southwest of Chehelsitoon.

Rockets were reported exploding in the vicinity of Kabul Museum, which is just across the road from Darulaman Palace.

"The Museum took no direct hits but its in the line of fire," said one pro-Rabbani soldier in Darulaman.

Parked in the street between Darulaman Palace and the Museum was a small military convoy including mobile anti-aircraft cannon and a BM-12 rocket launcher.

Many groups of pro-Rabbani troops, some in uniform but many in civilian clothes, were seen either patrolling this area of southern Kabul, or resting in the shade of alleys.

The Taleban offensive was, according to many Kabul military sources, successfully achieved after a pro-Rabbani commander sold his defensive position.

Kabul central city has not come under Taleban rocket or artillery fire although the capital is within easy range.

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The defence ministry also said that the Taleban had launched an offensive from their western frontlines, but this was repulsed.

Kabul Deploys Missile Against Taleban

LD1110182395 Tehran IRNA in English 1738 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Oct. 11, IRNA — In response to the Taleban militia's threat of assaulting Kabul, the government of President Borhanoddin Rabbani has deployed Luna missile in Kooh-e-Safi (Safi mountain) to hit the enemy targets in Maydan Shahr and Mohammad Agha areas.

According to reports reaching here from Kabul both Rabbani and his Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, are determined to use any weapons against Taleban.

Missiles with the range of about 130 kilometers have been deployed in Kooh-e-Charkhi and could possibly be used against Taleban in Maydan Shahr, capital of Vardak Province, and Mohammad Agha in Lugar Province.

To deter the Taleban militia, Ahmad Shah Mas'ud has established seven strong defence lines around Kabul, the report added. All the Panjsheris, the most loyal to Mas'ud, have dug in south of Kabul to counter Taleban's expected onslaught from the Logar.

It is reported that the defence of the western part of the Afghan capital has been handed over to the Badakhshanis. Badakhshan is the hometown of Rabbani.

Another report says the Taleban fired rockets on Balahisar in the south of Kabul while Taleban jet-fighters for the first time bombed government positions in the Paghman area on Tuesday [10 October], a news report claimed.

The Taleban possess some MiG-21 and Su-22 Russian-made aircraft. They captured a number of planes when Shindand air base and Herat fell to them.

Taleban Advances Into Kabul 'Suburbs'

BK1210035195 Hong Kong AFP in English 0341 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul Oct 12 (AFP) — Afghanistan's Taleban Islamic militia have captured Rishkor, the site of a major military base south of Kabul, and unconfirmed reports say some of their advance forces have already entered the suburbs of Kabul.

Abdullah, Defence Ministry spokesman for President Borhanuddin Rabbani's regime, admitted late Wednesday [11 October] that the Taleban had captured Rishkor from presidential forces only hours after seizing the nearby strategic town of Chahar Asiab, 25 kilometers (16 miles) south of the capital.

Rishkor, which is only 12 kilometers (six miles) from the centre of Kabul, opens the way by road to the former royal palace of Darulaman and the south of the capital.

According to a Taleban spokesman, some of its forces have already reached Darulaman and Karte Se, another area south of Kabul, as well as Pul-i-Charki to the northeast of the capital after a pro-Rabbani commander rallied to their cause.

But the reports could not be independently confirmed.

The Taleban also say the militia captured Darra-i-Ghaza, a village near Paghman, west of Kabul, and [words indistinct] Islamic faction headed by Rasul Sayyaf, main ally of Rabbani in the Kabul coalition.

In the past year, the student-led militia has taken control of the southern half of Afghanistan and vowed to take the capital by force if Rabbani does not step down. Its previous attempt to take over Kabul saw it repelled by Rabbani's forces.

Defense Ministry Statement Issued on Kabul Attack

LD1110174095 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Dear compatriots, yesterday afternoon, the Taleban, backed by their Pakistani masters, launched an attack on the government forces' positions from two directions. Their attack was mounted after a series of propaganda, which was started some time ago. By the grace and help of God, the mojahedin and the Islamic state's hero forces inflicted heavy losses on the foreigners' hirelings through their crushing blows in Maydanshar front. Their attack was repulsed, and more than 60 Taleban and hireling militia were killed, dozens of others injured. A large quantity of their arms and ammunition was seized by the Islamic state's forces.

However, in Logar's direction, because of the treachery of a commander by the name of Popal, who is being detained now, the Taleban group made an advance, which was later pushed back.

The government forces have fortified their positions and are repulsing the attackers' raids with high morale. As a result of the bravery of the mojahedin and the heroic Islamic army, heavy losses have been inflicted on the so-called Taleban and foreign mercenaries.

As they have so far powerfully neutralized and made ineffective any conspiracy, attack, and intervention, the brave mojahedin and epic-making Islamic army

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are not only aborting the current conspiracy but also inflicting crushing blows on any conspiracy aimed at our country and people. The country's heroic army enjoys such high combat readiness that it reassures, with strong probability, the Kabul residence and all compatriots that no threat will disrupt their normal and dignified life. Heavy blows have been inflicted on the Taleban that have completely weakened their morale; their ranks have become shacky and many are retreating from the front lines. You will see soon the disintegration of the hireling forces and mercenaries. The people and the Islamic sovereignty will defend with help from the almighty God and the support of you, heroic compatriots, the Islamic regime, territorial integrity, and national and Islamic pride of the country. The lasting victory is our peoples and country.

Radio Reports on 'Defeated' Taleban Attack

LD1110181095 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An attack by the ISI's [Inter-Services intelligence of Pakistan] Taleban group was defeated last night in the south and western direction of Kabul.

Last night the ISI's Taleban group launched an attack from the direction of Logar and around midnight from the direction of Maydan Shar [capital of Wardag Province in west of Kabul] on the defensive lines of the Islamic army.

Commander Gol Haydar, one of the commanders along the defensive line in the south of Kabul, said that an armored column of Taleban followed by a large number of infantry men supported by artillery and tank fire launched an attack across the defensive lines. The defenders of the southern defensive lines, by their courageous resistance, have imposed a heavy loss of life on the Taleban and have set on fire four tanks and two of their combat-machines [as heard].

An officer in charge of the National Guard and the western defensive lines said that the Taleban's attack on the western direction was defeated in the early hours and the attackers were forced to flee. During the fighting, two enemy tanks were destroyed and 60 of the attackers were killed; their bodies are still lying at the front of the defensive lines.

During this fighting, one PK, one rocket-launcher, and 12 Kalashnikovs were seized as booty by the mojahedin of the Islamic army.

Esteemed Sakhi, general head of the national security, said that the fighting is intensively under way in the southern direction. All commanding points and slopes are all in the control of the Islamic army's mojahedin. At the very moment, a major section of the attacker's forces are under siege by the mojahedin forces in the southern direction.

The general head of the national security added: A large force is ready for the complete defeat of the militias in order to defeat them decisively. He said we have not yet used the heavy rocket forces to repulse the attacks. A maximum use will be made of these forces for the decisive defeat of the militia.

A source of Air Force of the Islamic State of Afghanistan revealed that last night the bombers of the Islamic army dropped several bombs, one after another, on an armored column of the militia, as a result of which a major section of this column was eliminated. The exact figure of the attackers' losses is not yet accurately reported.

A BAKHTAR correspondent who has visited the front lines of today's fighting reports that the mojahedin of the Islamic army are enjoying a high level of combat preparedness and are impatiently waiting for the order to start attacks.

Dostam Forces Launch Offensive North of Kabul

BK1210070495 Hong Kong AFP in English 0655 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Oct 12 (AFP) — Former communist general Abdul Rashid Dostam launched an attack on Afghan Government forces on Thursday [12 October] in a bid to cut off access to the strategic Salang Pass about 100 kilometers (60 miles) north of Kabul, a Dostam spokesman told AFP.

Sibghattullah Zaki, spokesman for the ethnic Uzbek leader, said he had no news on whether the attack on government positions in the pass, in the Hindu Kush mountain range, was successful.

He added that if the Uzbeks managed to gain control, they would then target the stronghold of President Borhanoddin Rabbani's defense chief, Ahmed Shah Mas'ud at Jabul Saraj which is about 60 kilometres (35 miles) from Kabul.

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Bangladesh

Iranian President Continues Official Visit

Radio Reports on Official Talks

LD1110135095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The first round of talks between President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and the Bangladesh prime minister began in Dhaka this morning.

During the talks today, which took place in the presence of the foreign minister, minister of construction Jihad, commerce minister, and a number of other officials from the two countries, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia explored ways to expand regional and international cooperation, particularly cooperation in the Islamic world. They also exchanged views on ways to deepen bilateral ties in various fields. Our correspondent reports from Dhaka via telephone:

[Correspondent] In the meeting, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said greater cooperation between Asian countries in different areas would be in the interests of the regional nations. He underlined the readiness of the Islamic Republic of Iran to help Bangladesh and deepen the bilateral ties and boost cooperation in various fields, such as agriculture; energy; construction of dams, silos, and technical and engineering equipment; and transit of goods between Iran, Bangladesh, and Turkmenistan.

The president stated: The participation of Iran in the region's technical and commercial projects can effectively help reduce costs and counter the greed of Western contractors.

The president stressed the need to strengthen unity and cooperation between Islamic countries with the aim to resolve the problems of the Islamic world and the Third World in general; that is to say, for instance, the problems in Palestine, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, and Somalia.

Begum Khaleda Zia, in turn, welcomed increased cooperation between the two countries in the mentioned areas. She stated: Cooperation and friendship between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Bangladesh is rooted in our common religion and cultural heritage. This factor has also created the grounds for greater mutual trust and respect.

She referred to the importance of the economic organization of SAARC [South Asia Association of Regional Cooperation] for South Asian countries. She, moreover, underlined the importance of Iran's role in strengthening cooperation between the members of SAARC and the Economic Cooperation Organization.

The Bangladesh prime minister also spoke about some of the ongoing problems in the Islamic world, for instance the problems facing Bosnia-Herzegovina.

She stated that bolstering cooperation in the areas of trade and joint investment on the basis of mutual respect is an important factor for growth and development in regional countries. She added: We want to encourage the private sector in Iran to increase its investment in different scientific, technical, and commercial ventures in Bangladesh.

Begum Khaleda Zia, furthermore, referred to the good relations that Iran and India enjoy at present, and called for Iran's help to boost ties between India and Bangladesh.

Offers Assistance in Oil, Gas Projects

BK1110140095 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1200 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Bangladesh and Iran have (?expressed) common ideas on bilateral, regional, and international affairs. The two countries also agreed to explore new areas of cooperation in various sectors. The agreement was reached during the formal talks between the two countries in Dhaka today. The Bangladeshi delegation was led by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, while the Iranian side was headed by visiting President Ali Akbar Hashmemi-Rafsanjani. President Rafsanjani said the existing relations between Bangladesh and Iran are excellent, adding that they will develop further. He said that vast scope exists for further expansion of relations between the two countries. Rafsanjani said that the two countries can work together to remove poverty and to ensure a bright future for their people. The Iranian president offered to assist Bangladesh by providing it with his country's vast experience in oil and gas exploration.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia sought Iranian cooperation in various fields. She said a congenial atmosphere for investment is prevailing in Bangladesh and asked the Iranian investors to invest in this country. Begum Zia also urged the Iranian leader to increase imports from Bangladesh, especially jute, jute goods, pharmaceuticals and other items. Referring to oil and gas exploration in the country, the prime minister said long-term agreement is necessary in this sphere. President Rafsanjani agreed.

Begum Zia also referred to the Bangladeshi workers in Iran and asked the Iranian president to look sympathetically into their affairs. She referred to the prob-

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lem of stranded Pakistanis and said that for the last 24 years they have been waiting for repatriation. She sought Iran's support and cooperation to persuade Pakistan to resolve the crisis as soon as possible. The prime minister made a special reference to further consolidating the solidarity of the Muslim world. The Bangladeshi prime minister said the problems of Bosnia, Afghanistan, Palestine, and Tajikistan should be resolved immediately.

Rafsanjani expressed similar sentiments and supported Begum Zia's call to hold an emergency summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. The two leaders emphasized the need for a speedy implementation of the memorandum of understanding that is going to be signed tomorrow. It relates to bilateral cooperation in investment, energy, manpower, agriculture, shipping, telecommunications, avoidance of double taxation on trade, and preservation of the environment.

Radio Bangladesh's representative says that the Bangladesh-Iran joint commission meeting will be held in Tehran next month, and it will extensively review the memorandum of understanding.

Earlier, in the morning, the Iranian president went to the national martyrs memorial at Savar. He paid his respects at the memorial and signed the visitors' book. Rafsanjani also planted a sapling of [word indistinct] on the mausoleum premises.

Discusses Economic Cooperation

BK1110163495 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1500 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Inaugurating a seminar on Bangladesh-Iran trade cooperation in Dhaka this afternoon, Iranian President Rafsanjani said that stronger industrial and technical cooperation between the two countries will be more beneficial than trade. Rafsanjani advised the private sector trading firms of the two countries to find ways to further expand the bilateral economic cooperation between Dhaka and Tehran. He said that Iran is happy to provide a transit facility to Bangladesh for trading with Central Asian republics. Addressing the seminar, among others, were Commerce Minister M. Shamsul Islam; Iranian Commerce Minister Yahya ol-Eshaq; and 'Ali Shams Albikani [name as transliterated], secretary general of the Iranian chamber of commerce. In his speech, Bangladesh's commerce minister stressed the need to increase the volume of trade between the two countries. The Iranian commerce minister said that his country is ready to extend support for Bangladesh's associate membership of the economic block of the Economic Cooperation Organization, comprising Iran, Pakistan and Turkey.

Praises Persian Language Faculty

LD1110203695 Tehran IRNA in English 1830 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dhaka, Oct. 11, IRNA — On the second day of his visit to the Bangladesh capital today Iranian President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani laid the foundation stone of the Persian language faculty at Dhaka University campus.

Bangladeshi minister of education, Zamiruddin Sirkar, minister of energy and mineral resources, Khondaker Mosharraf Hussain, Dhaka university vice-chancellor, A'majuddin Ahmad, members of parliament and scientific and cultural figures were present at the ceremony.

Rafsanjani said in his address that: "Today, the independence and glory of any nation depends on the status of its university. The different branches of scientific and technological courses are being seriously pursued in Islamic states."

One of the reasons the British colonialists decided to discourage the teaching and use of Persian language 160 years ago in this area, he said was to create a vacuum in literature and mystic learning.

"I, as a Muslim, a Persian-speaker, and a student of Gnosticism and literature, congratulate Dhaka University for the step it has taken this day, and I consider this as a right move in contrast to what the British had done," said the Iranian president.

For over seven centuries until the British decision, Persian reigned supreme in Bengal, including Bangladesh, with this part of the sub-continent producing Persian poets, historians, and scholars of merit.

It is said that in the 13th century, Jalaluddin Tabrizi, an Iranian mystic came settled in Bengal, and was instrumental in the spread of Islam and Persian language.

Persian also influenced the Bengali language, and over the past two centuries, such famous Persian works as Firdausi's Shahnameh, Sheikh Sa'di Shirazi's Golestan and Bustan, and the divan (collection of poems) of Hafez Shirazi, have been translated into Bengali.

The Dhaka University vice-chancellor and the Bangladeshi minister of education, also delivered speeches at the ceremony, welcoming the Iranian president and his laying foundation for the Persian faculty.

Iranian minister of foreign affairs, 'Ali Akbar Velayati and construction jihad minister, Mohammad Foruzesh, were also present at the ceremony along with the rest of Rafsanjani's entourage.

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A'majuddin Ahmad told IRNA, that the Persian language has almost seven centuries of background in the region and that the Bengali language has over 7,000 Persian loan words which is indication of the deep cultural relations between Iran and Bangladesh.

Cautions on Trade With 'Outside World'

LD1110200495 Tehran IRNA in English 1915 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dhaka, Oct. 11, IRNA — President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani addressing the Iran-Bangladesh trade cooperation seminar here today, called upon Third World countries to be cautious and on guard in their trade dealings with the outside world.

Due to lack of proper trade informations Third World countries always face a loss, and there should be an end to this process, Rafsanjani told traders and industrialists.

In view of the new trade situation prevailing in the world, the Muslim countries need to review their economic and trade cooperation, he suggested.

He reminded the seminar that before launching its economic development plans, Iran was an importer of most of the commodities, but today the country enjoys self-sufficiency in many areas and even exports the surplus. Bangladeshi traders could avail of Iran's experiences, he said.

The two countries' chambers of commerce should consider the new developments and bilateral trade relations, otherwise the Western companies by taking on the role of a broker will feed on the interests of the Third World countries, warned the Iranian president.

Hoping that agreements reached between the two countries would pave the way for further expansion of economic cooperation, he said Iran was ready to act as transit point for Bangladesh's trade with the land-locked Central Asian republics.

Urges Muslim 'Unity' Against Enemies

LD1110221995 Tehran IRNA in English 2213 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dhaka, Oct. 11, IRNA — President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani speaking at a dinner banquet given by his Bangladesh counterpart Abdur Rahman Biswas here tonight, said most of the problems of the Muslim world could be solved through joint cooperation among Islamic countries.

Rafsanjani also called for expansion of bilateral cooperation between Iran and Bangladesh at the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Non-Aligned Movement, and other international forums.

Emphasizing on Muslim awareness against forces of discord, he said Muslim unity will more than ever frustrate the enemies of Islam.

He also expressed his pleasure on the growing political and economic cooperation between the two countries.

Biswas referred to the religious and cultural bonds of the two countries and called for further strengthening of mutual relations.

Saying that Tehran-Dhaka bilateral economic cooperation have greatly progressed, he expressed hope that the process will continue.

He also called for Iranian efforts for cooperation between the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

Iran is a member of the 10-nation ECO, whose other members are Pakistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan.

India

Daily Views 'Bhutto Tactic' in Dealing With U.S.

BK1210093895 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 10 Oct 95 p 17

[Article by M.D. Nalapat: "PPP's secret game plan for Kashmir"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Benazir Bhutto regime in Pakistan is anticipating a "strengthening of its bargaining position with India by next year, as a result of the hung parliament expected in the polls," according to high level sources in the commercial and political spheres of Lahore and Karachi.

These individuals, who spoke on condition of anonymity, gave details of what they claimed represented the "thinking of the Bhutto government at the policy-making levels."

The sources claim that the passing of the Hank Brown amendment by the U.S. Senate has "stabilised Ms Bhutto's position vis-a-vis the army." They added that the "hidden compact" between the Pakistan prime minister and the army provides that she will defer to the views of the latter "in all matters of internal security," and that the minister of the interior will "in effect take orders from the army."

Secondly, that she will "give a free hand to the armed forces to procure weapons." In particular, Ms Bhutto is expected to use her "considerable contacts with

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the American administration and legislature to loosen restraints on U.S. supply of arms to Islamabad."

According to political sources based in Rawalpindi, the Bhutto tactic is to "play upon the pet theories of prominent U.S. officials." For example, according to these sources, "U.S vice- president Al Gore sees visions of a grand civilisational reconciliation between Christianity and Islam, presumably in a future Gore administration." In such a process, the Pakistani side has "shrewdly put itself as an interlocutor. "

First Lady Hillary Clinton, said sources, "is interested in improving the lot of women in Islamic countries and sees Benazir Bhutto as a useful ally in such a task." The Pakistani officials add that South Asia "is not at all a matter of concern for President Clinton, who has therefore allowed the vice-president and others to set policy there "

Apart from pandering to civilisational concerns, the Bhutto regime has also exploited the U.S. tensions with Iran to win back its old support base in the Pentagon. According to high-level sources within the political establishment in Pakistan, Ms Bhutto "has promised that in the event of an escalation of U.S. Iran tensions, Pakistan would provide ELINT (electronic intelligence) facilities to the U.S. and also permit the setting-up of safe areas for anti-regime Iranians, on the principle that providing refuge is in line with the tenets of the faith."

In order to keep at bay Tehran's suspicions of precisely such a deal "prominent non-officials, mostly clerics, have been visiting Iran to pooh pooh reports of a Washington-Islamabad understanding against Tehran."

As the visits are by 'non-officials' it is expected that they "will not alarm Washington."

Mr Asif Zardari, husband of Ms Bhutto, has according to these sources become "the point man of the other face of Pakistani policy." In particular, he has been "given the mandate of reassuring Iran and facilitating the development of a militant network funded by profits from the poppy trade."

Such a network is the pet project of fundamentalist groups within Pakistan, and part of the "hidden compact" between the Bhutto regime and the fundamentalists is that — barring the odd arrest or deportation — "the network (and its source of funding) will operate virtually undisturbed," according to sources.

The Bhutto regime expects a period of severe political uncertainty in India after the 1996 polls. As a result it hopes to get greater concessions from India, especially over Kashmir. According to political sources within Pakistan, the regime's game plan in Kashmir is to "first wrest near-total autonomy for the Valley, through U.S. pressure on India as well as by militant action."

After the militants strengthen their base, as a result of the freedom allowed to their activities after autonomy, "they will launch a struggle for unification with Pakistan." Thus, "before the three years when she has to face the electorate again, Ms Bhutto hopes to annex the Valley," sources claim.

While admitting that the "total support" of the Clinton administration has strengthened Ms Bhutto politically, political and commercial sources within Pakistan say that one factor could upset all her plans. This is the "tailspin caused by Karachi to the Pakistan economy." Interior minister Babar's army-directed policy of repression of the MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement] "has only made matters worse." These sources add that "several leading political and commercial circles in Pakistan are in favour of putting aside the never-ending Kashmir dispute with India and establishing normal trade ties."

According to them, the other prominent politician in Pakistan, Mian Nawaz Sharif, is in favour of "development, not tension," though they agree that there were few signs of such an attitude when Mr Sharif was prime minister of Pakistan.

Daily Says U.S. Arms Data 'Obfuscate' Reality

BK1210083795 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 10 Oct 95 p 16

[Editorial: "Lying Statistics"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Lack of transparency is invariably counter-productive in the long run. The Indian government's notorious shortcomings in this respect in the area of national security have been exploited to the full by foreigners with an axe to grind. Tendentious reportage on the India-China war of 1962, Kashmir and now Indo-Pakistan relations has often placed the Indian government on the defensive. For their part, the generalist bureaucracy and politicians who do not adequately interact with the external world are unaware of the need to put across the Indian case effectively to the international audience. This Indian weakness has been fully exploited, especially by the U.S. bureaucracy which has also used the American hold on the international media to its maximum advantage. One result of this disadvantageous state of affairs is the repeated attempt by American officials, the U.S. ambassador to India included, to compare a 3.5 billion dollars arms imports by India in five years with some 1.5 billion dollars arms imports by Pakistan in the same period to justify the recent Hank Brown amendment, permitting Pakistan to receive 370 million dollars of sophisticated military equipment. This

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comparison uses data for the years 1989 to 1993 while the right way of looking at the data is to take 1990 or 1991 as the base line since the U.S. invoked the Pressler amendment against Pakistan in October 1990. Before that period India has to consider its defence acquisitions on the basis of established U.S. Pakistan military relationship.

The large arms imports into India in 1989 were the result of orders placed some two or three years earlier when the U.S.- Pakistan military relationship was at its warmest. The Indian defence expenditure and imports started declining sharply after 1990-91 when the Pressler amendment became effective. In the UN arms transfer register data for 1992 and 1993 on 20 importers of conventional arms, Pakistan features in the 11th position and India is not in the picture at all. In 1994, in terms of arms deliveries, Pakistan with 300 million dollars imports, is tenth while India does not find a place among the ten. The data furnished by the U.S. government on arms transfer agreements for 1994 place Pakistan, with agreements amounting to 1,200 million dollars, in the fifth place while India is not among the ten. In fact, if the four-year period 1991-94 is taken together, Pakistan emerges in the ninth place with 2.2 billion dollars of arms import agreements, while India is nowhere in the top ten. A dispassionate analysis would reveal that India has carried out very significant reductions in defence expenditure and defence imports in the last four years without any reciprocity from Pakistan. By using 1989 as the base year the U.S. officials are trying to obfuscate the current reality. It is a pity that the ministry of defence has failed to explain the Indian case with full data.

Agreement on Expanding Trade With Russia Reported

BK1210094195 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and Russia have agreed to expand their bilateral trade and economic cooperation substantially. The entire gamut of bilateral relations came up for detailed review at the four-day meeting of the Indo-Russian Joint Commission which ended in New Delhi today. Addressing a joint press conference later, the Russian deputy prime minister, Mr. Yuriy Yarov, and the external affairs minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, said the trade between India and Russia is likely to exceed the 5,000 crore [rupees] target this year.

UN Envoy Assails Pakistan for Fueling 'Terrorism'

BK1210094495 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India has asked Pakistan to desist from promoting terrorism and interfering in the internal affairs of neighboring countries like India and Afghanistan. Speaking at the United Nations, the Indian ambassador to the world body, Mr. Nalin Suri, said that instead of putting its own house in order, Pakistan is attempting to sow discord and fuel terrorism in the neighboring countries. He also charged Pakistan with illegally holding a part of Jammu and Kashmir. Mr. Suri was retorting to the Pakistani ambassador's repeated allegations of violation of human rights in Jammu and Kashmir.

Daily Criticizes Rao 'Inaction' on Hostages Issue

BK1210075395 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 11 Oct 95 p 8

[Editorial: "Freeing the hostages"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] THE official silence on the issue of the release of the four foreign tourists held captive by the terrorist outfit Al-Faran is understandable, but it cannot allay the anxiety about their fate. It is now more than three months since they fell into the hands of the Pakistan trained mercenaries along with two others, one of whom escaped to safety while the other was brutally killed. The Government had rightly adopted the stance that it would not strike a deal with Al-Faran, which initially wanted the release of some of the militants now in government custody in return for freeing the hostages. All through, the Government had been keeping the Western countries, to which the hostages belong, informed about the situation. As a result, they have appreciated how India has been handling the hostages issue. They also recognise India's limitations in attempting a forced release of the hostages except at grave risk to their, lives. In view of the little Compunction Al- Faran had in killing the Norwegian tourist, the Government was understandably wary of any adventurist course. Nonetheless, whether all these arguments continue to hold good and ensure the safety and release of the hostages remains to be seen. A time may have come when the whole issue needs to be considered afresh and appropriate action taken.

It cannot be that the Intelligence agencies have not assessed the situation and sized up Al-Faran. With all the equipment and infrastructure at their command, it would not have been difficult for them to find out the location where the hostages are held captive and the real intention of the kidnappers. The hope that Al- Faran would be tired of keeping the tourists and would, sooner

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than later, release them may not turn out to be real. That it comprises those who can descend to any level, is well known, more so as it is controlled from outside. The Al-Faran has turned a deaf ear to all the appeals for the release of the hostages from all over the world. It is true that the Narasimha Rao Government has thrived on inaction. Such inaction in dealing with the hostage crisis may have been the right thing so far but the time may have come for it to think in terms of contingency measures. What these ought to be is a matter that should better be left to experts.

Daily Calls UK Party's Stand on Kashmir 'Hogwash'

BK1010130395 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 9 Oct 95 p 13

[Editorial: "Labour's Volte-Face"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Whoever in the Government of India decided to send Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr R. L. Bhatia, to Britain's Labour Party conference at Brighton earlier this week must be upbraided for sheer lack of political sense. Mr Bhatia is a foreign affairs expert and a sober person. But he also happens to be a Minister of External Affairs. For him to represent the Indian National Congress at Brighton where he was made to listen to hogwash from biased British MPs about Indian "atrocities" in Kashmir spoke extremely poorly of the government's assessment of the British political scene. For weeks preceding the Labour Party conference, it was common knowledge that the pro- Pakistan Labour MPs were making some headway in getting an anti- India resolution on Kashmir adopted. In such circumstances, the Indian High Commission in UK should have advised New Delhi against deputing a Minister for Brighton. There certainly could have been a case for not sending any Indian representative to a Labour Party conference in Britain. The least the Government of India can do to salvage national honour is to advise Mr Bhatia not to rationalise the outcome of the Brighton conference.

As for the Labour Party, under the youthful leadership of Mr Tony Blair, its major obsession is to overcome Mr John Major. This, it believes, will be possible by winning some extra seats, a segment of which is determined by voters of Pakistani and Mirpuri origin. The Labour Party's devotion to these votes is so overpowering that its shadow foreign secretary, Mr Robin Cook, has been forced to make a right about turn on his statement a few months ago that Kashmir is a part of India. He and Mr Blair are now party to UN resolutions, but talk only about the self-determination part, and not the violation by Pakistan of the resolutions in not vacating the part of Jammu and Kashmir occupied by it. If Mr Blair comes to power in 1997, his bias is bound to sour Indo-British relations. The Labour pain that one witnessed at Brighton may deliver some seats in the House of Commons. But it would be interesting to know whether the Labour Party has put all its stakes on Mirpuri and Pakistani votes against the reality and potential of thriving economic cooperation with India. It ought to know that the two are not mutually exclusive.

Ministry Rejects OIC Statement on Jammu, Kashmir

BK1110161995 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister has directed the central ministries to take urgent steps to move adequate quantities of essential commodities to the Kashmir valley before the onset of winter. Mr. Narasimha Rao asked the ministries of civil supplies, food and railways to work out the details and submit a report to him before his departure on a foreign visit on Sunday [15 October]. He gave the direction during a review of programs undertaken by the central ministries. He said people in the valley should not have any problem in getting supplies of food grains, kerosene, and other petroleum products during winter. Briefing newspersons, an official spokesman said the meeting was attended by, among others, the ministers of welfare, civil supplies, urban affairs and employment, small scale and agro-industries, and labor. About the revamped Public Distribution System, it was emphasized that food grains should be delivered at the door step of the fair price shops to prevent diversion and to ensure timely supply to the consumers.

India has rejected the statement on Jammu and Kashmir issued by the foreign ministers of the Organization of the Islamic Countries [OIC]. Terming the statement as false and misleading, New Delhi made it clear that the statement adopted at the New York meeting early this month is clearly at the behest of one country. It is also inappropriate to refer to one group as true representatives of the Kashmiri people as it is not backed by any popular mandate. The OIC communique does not enjoy consensus among the member countries. An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said the OIC should advise Islamabad to abjure from sponsoring terrorism and refrain Pakistan from interfering in the internal affairs of other countries.

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Maharashtra Government Move on Enron Welcomed

BK1010043195 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 10 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The former Maharashtra chief minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, has welcomed the state government's decision to renegotiate the Dabhol power project with Enron. Talking to newsmen in Bombay, Mr. Pawar said that politics should not be brought into while taking economic decisions, and added that there should be a committee of experts for renegotiation.

Iran

Daily Views U.S. Plan for Iraq's 'Dismemberment'

NC1010162895 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 30 Sep 95 p 15

[Commentary by A. Salah: "The CIA's New Project for Kurdistan"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Did we not witness the indescribably heartwarming scene of the welcome for the president by the residents of Mahabad and the Kurdish-inhabited areas of Islamic Iran? It was indeed gratifying and for a second the situation in the Kurdish-inhabited areas of our neighbors, that is Turkey and Iraq, flashed before my eyes. There is a world of difference in the situations there and here.

In Iran, our Kurdish brothers and sisters are living in quintessential security under the aegis of Islam, and the government has tried its utmost to mobilize its efforts for the development and prosperity of these regions. The Kurdish-inhabited areas of Iraq and Turkey are in the grip of extreme insecurity and are subjected to innumerable attacks and brutal massacres.

As President Hashemi-Rafsanjani remarked very kindly on this subject to a gathering of Mahabad residents: You can see what is happening across the borders in Iraqi and Turkish Kurdistan and what the situation is here. Hence it would not be inappropriate if we were to cast a cursory glance at the conditions in the Kurd-inhabited regions in these three countries and the U.S. scenario of this sensitive region.

Perhaps there is no need to elaborate on the horrifying situation in Iraqi Kurdistan, the conditions there are so critical that we observe almost daily attacks by the Turkish forces under the pretext of the presence of the PKK [Kurdistan Workers' Party] and the violent clashes among the Iraqi Kurds and the plots stemming from the presence of the multinational Poised Hammer forces in those regions.

This region was experiencing unrest and suffering even before the time of Mostafa Barzani. And the imperialists and the diabolical greater powers pretended to be solicitous and kind doctors for the woes of the region's people. Now after the lapse of four years of the Western forces' direct presence in northern Iraq, not only have the ordeals and tribulations of the Kurdish people not been mitigated, they have become deeper and only Western interests have been ensured.

With the excuse of protecting the people of northern Iraq against Saddam's attacks, the Poised Hammer forces have dug their talons deeper into the region, the outcome of which has been nothing but unrest, misfortune, and distress for the Kurdish Muslims. The flames of discord continue to lengthen each day in these regions. Of course the Zionists have also capitalized on this opportunity. They have consolidated their presence in this part of the Middle East with groups of Jewish Kurds in northern Iraq!

Today, due to the seeds of discord that were scattered by the United States and its allies in northern Iraq, the Iraqi Kurdish groups have become embroiled in sedition and the people live in fear of a new debacle every day.

In Turkish Kurdistan the situation is similar. With a population of 15 million Kurds, Turkey has been at war with the Kurdish guerrillas for more than 10 years and the shadows of this crisis situation are perceived in all of the country's political, social, and economic spheres. During this period at least 25,000 Kurds lost their lives in clashes with and attacks by the Turkish forces. These massacres continued even during the government of "General Ciller."

The secular Turkish regime, which has refrained from bestowing even the minimum of legal rights to the Kurdish people, is now pessimistic about ever gaining control over the Kurds in the country and has openly extended its hands toward the "CIA experts." It has asked them to undertake a project in order to extricate itself from this problem. The Turkish officials openly justify this cooperation by saying: "Since we have values that are similar to those of the Western world, what is the problem if we ask them to assist us in solving our dilemmas?"

Yes, there is no problem and there never has been so far! They only feared the reaction of the Turkish Muslims and apparently these seem to have been waived aside as well.

In order to deceive the public and its Muslim people, the secular Turkish Government presents NATO's cosmetic strikes against the Serbs with immense fanfare in line with its convergence with the West. This is to give the

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impression that the Westerners are on the Muslims' side, as if to say they care more for the interests of Islam than the Muslims themselves!

A month ago, John Deutch, the chief of the U.S. espionage organization, the CIA, made a covert trip to Turkey. Even before he could announce any plan, the Turkish press disseminated a so-called scientific report, which in fact was intended to project the CIA's viewpoint and to reflect the U.S. view, thus paving the way for its plan. However, this plan was so horrible that even Mesut Yilmaz, the leader of the Motherland Party declared: "This report does not reflect the interests of the Turkish Government and is a CIA report."

Ciller responded furiously to these remarks saying: "Does Mr. Yilmaz have any special links with the CIA that we do not know about?"

In the midst of this clamor the U.S. plan for talks with leaders of Kurdish groups in northern Iraq, that is Barzani and Talabani, was announced in New York. During these talks Turkey was also invited to participate as an observer. The Turkish Government, which constantly seeks its own hopeful interests in northern Iraq of gaining access to the oil-rich regions of Mosul and Kirkuk, and constantly hopes that in the event Iraq is dismembered it will get this part of its hide, also attended the session. It ignored the earlier commitments it had made at the tripartite session of Iran, Turkey, and Syria in Tehran stressing support for the independence and territorial integrity of Iraq and joined the ranks of the Iraqi secessionists.

After the talks began, the Turkish officials realized that in addition to the CIA, Turkey, and the Iraqi groups, British Government representatives had also been invited. They then walked out of the talks in protest.

Even though the Dublin talks ended without achieving anything, in practice it proved that the United States and Britain were seeking to wrest the initiative on Kurdistan. The Turkish Government was taken aback by the situation and was torn between supporting northern Iraq's territorial integrity and succumbing to the dismemberment of northern Iraq. The latter would obviously have a negative impact on the Kurd-inhabited areas in Turkey just like someone who wants to offer prayers but cannot decide between two mosques!

Demirel, on the one hand, recalled the plots of the imperialists with deep concern and stated: "After talking with the NATO secretary general I have reached the conclusion that they intend to separate the Kurd-inhabited areas in Turkey as well."

On the other hand, the heavy silence of the mass media and the secular politicians in Turkey regarding the CIA plan for creating another cancerous tumor in the Middle East in the name of an independent Kurdish government indicates Turkey's confusion on the subject.

It has been said that in its new project for Kurdistan, the CIA is seeking to carve a rectangular shaped country for the Kurds out of Turkish, Syrian, Iraqi, and Iranian territories. As it will be a landlocked country with no access to other parts by land, sea, or air it will become a federation with Turkey so that the latter can ensure the existence of Kurdistan.

In this plan, what prompted Turkey to accept the breakup of the southeastern parts of the country and the Kurd-inhabited areas of its neighbors is access to the oil-rich areas of Mosul and Karkuk in the name of a federation with Turkey. Thus it ensures its oil needs.

In any case, it appears that some of the secular politicians who are more obsessed with the smell of oil than the territorial integrity of their country intend to support this plan. This would inflict a blow against the Muslims and Islamic countries and demands the awakening of the Muslims.

Tehran Condemns U.S. Military Presence in Gulf

LD1110214095 Tehran IRNA in English 2120 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] United Nations Hq. (New York), Oct. 11, IRNA — Iran's permanent ambassador to the United Nations, Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, expressed concern over the growing U.S. military presence in the Persian Gulf.

In a letter to the president of the UN Security Council dated October 6 and circulated as a document of the Security Council, Kharrazi said the Government of the United States has recently published a special warning under navigation notice no. 27/95 of May 12, 1995 through the Middle East navigation aids service in Bahrain declaring the area of northern Persian Gulf as unsafe for commercial shipping and falsely attributing the insecurity of the area to Iranian flag ships.

"The United States' allegations relates to those measures by the naval forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran which aim to maintain the security and safety of international navigation in the region, implement provisions of sanctions against Iraq and in particular, prevent misuse of the Iranian flag or the use of forged documents and manifests," said Kharrazi's letter.

It said the Islamic Republic of Iran categorically rejects the above mentioned allegations, being fully aware and

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committed to the obligations for maintenance of safety and security in the region and in the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions as the largest littoral country of the Persian Gulf.

Kharrazi said: "Expressing concern about the misuse of Security Council resolutions by the United States which takes place with the purpose of expanding the military presence in the Persian Gulf area, the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran considers the recent activities and provocative statements by the U.S. Government to be in contravention of the obligations under Article 2 of the charter of the United Nations which give rise to crisis and insecurity in the region, and condemns them as a source of threat to international peace and security."

Official on 'Sinister' Western Intervention Plan

LD1210103395 Tehran IRNA in English 1000 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Oct. 12, IRNA — Iran's policy is based on non-interference in the affairs of others and will not allow others to intervene in its internal affairs, said Interior Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati here Wednesday [11 October].

Besharati, speaking at the 12th session of Iran-Turkey joint security committee, referred to the sinister objectives of Western powers to overshadow Tehran-Ankara cordial ties and stressed that Iran would not allow anyone to mar its relations with Turkey.

He added that Iran-Turkey borders were the safest compared to other Iranian frontiers, adding that Iran had adopted necessary measures, including digging channels and installing barbed wires, to maintain security on common borders and prevent illegal travel of people.

The Iranian minister condemned any kind of terrorist activities and said Iran was a victim of terrorist acts, therefore, was ready to cooperate with other countries in campaign against terrorism.

Besharati said exchange of delegations between the two countries would serve as a determining factor in strengthening bilateral relations.

Head of the Turkish Security Committee Muherrem Goktayoglu appreciated Iran's "fraternal and positive" stands and said Turkish officials had always trusted the Iranian officials for their good will and efforts for consolidation of traditional and historical relations between the two neighboring states.

On reasons for Turkey building up forces in northern Iraq, Goktayoglu said Ankara's policy was based on territorial integrity of Iraq, adding that Turkey's military presence was to halt attacks by government opponents. He expressed satisfaction over the outcome of his talks with iranian officials and termed as "extensive" areas of mutual cooperation.

The session, opened simultaneously in Tehran and West Azerbaijan province last Friday, wound up on Wednesday.

Commentary Views Dialogue Between Kurdish Groups

LD1010140995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1053 GMT 10 Oct 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] After the failure of U.S. efforts to mediate between Iraqi Kurdish groups, these groups have now turned to the Islamic Republic of Iran to solve their differences. Representative delegations from the Patriotic Union of Iraqi Kurdistan [PUK], headed by Jalal Talabani, and the Iraqi Kurdish Democratic Party [KDP], headed by Mas'ud Barzani, have tried during the past five days by holding a meeting in Tehran, with the mediation of Iran, to find a solution.

Before the meeting, Talabani and Barzani paid separate visits to Iran and held talks with our country's officials about their differences. Although no details about these talks have been released, it would seem that the Iraqi Kurdish groups have found Iran's proposals for resolving their differences suitable and have agreed to hold a meeting in Tehran on that basis.

The participants in the Tehran meeting announced after five days of talks that large strides had been made toward the resolution of their differences and that the two sides would be holding further talks soon to resolve a few small outstanding problems.

For the past 17 months the Iraqi Kurdish groups have been engaged in clashes which have left about 2,000 dead. Apart from the losses of life and economic damage, this fighting has led to weapons spreading across northern parts of Iraq and paved the way for interference in the region by foreign powers. The spread of weapons on the one hand and foreign provocations on the other, increased the possibility of the spread of tension and clashes in northern Iraq to such an extent that there was a serious possibility that there would be another Afghanistan in this region.

The United States, which is trying to strengthen its foothold in the region, made an effort to exploit these circumstances and to force the Iraqi Kurdish groups into making compromises by imposing its principles and plans. It was on this basis that a meeting was held in

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Dublin, Ireland, toward the end of August with U.S. mediation. At this meeting, the Iraqi Kurdish groups signed an agreement to resolve their differences. To finalize the agreement and to sign it, another meeting was held in Dublin in August. Despite these U.S. efforts, no results were achieved.

The failure of U.S. mediation in resolving the differences between the Iraqi Kurdish groups was the outcome of a lack of trust in the United States and worries about interference by that country in northern Iraq. U.S. efforts in northern Iraq not only did not bring about an agreement between the groups in that region but also did not meet with the approval of the countries in the region. At their August tripartite meeting Iran, Turkey, and Syria discussed the situation in northern Iraq, condemned the intervention of foreign powers, and expressed their strong opposition to having the problems of the region dragged outside the region.

This is why Iran, as a trusted party which has been able to carry out an effective role in the region with regards to solving disputes, has embarked on resolving the problems in northern Iraq within the framework of regional efforts and is trying to bring their viewpoints as close together as possible.

In view of the fact that the U.S. aim in holding the Dublin meeting was to prevent Iraqi Kurdish groups from coming closer to Iran and to block the resolution of problems within the region, the holding of the meeting in Tehran reveals the failure of Washington's diplomacy.

Interior Minister Views Relations With Turkey

LD1110210895 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Iran's policy is based on noninterference in the domestic affairs of other countries and it does not allow any country to interfere in its internal affairs, said Interior Minister Besharati at a meeting today with the members of the joint security committee of Iran and Turkey.

He referred to the accursed aims of Western powers to sabotage the friendly relations between Iran and Turkey. He stressed the importance of further strengthening mutual ties.

Mr. Muharram Kuktaiogli, the chairman of the Turkish security committee, thanked Iran for its fundamental and positive policies. He called for the deepening of the age-old and historical ties between the two countries.

Commentary Views Turkey's Cross-Border Operation

NC1110182295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 10 Oct 95

[Unattributed commentary: "Turkey's Military Operation in Northern Iraq"]

[FBIS Translated Text] International news agencies have confirmed that Turkey has carried out a military operation in northern Iraq. Baghdad has strongly protested against it. Turkish Foreign Ministry Spokesman Omer Akbel has denied the claims that civilians have suffered significant emotional and material losses due to the military action. He said the operation was limited and aimed at obstructing the PKK [Workers Party of Kurdistan] attacks against Turkey from northern Iraq. However, it must be stressed that Turkey has carried out several cross-border operations in northern Iraq in the past. After each operation it claimed to have removed the PKK militants from the region. Nevertheless, it was not long before it took similar action for the same purpose.

The experts are convinced that the Turkish military operations in northern Iraq have been prompted by regional developments, particularly by those in Turkey. In addition, the outcome of the Dublin summit and the uneasiness caused in the Ankara government by the U.S. and British initiatives at the summit are some of the reasons for Turkey's latest military action.

Turkey's latest operation may be aimed at proving its ability to safeguard its border and controlling developments in northern Iraq, developments that may threaten its internal security. In view of that, Ankara officials have been putting strong pressure on the Kurdish groups, particularly Democratic Party of Kurdistan leader Mas'ud Barzani, to force them to support Turkey against the PKK.

Meanwhile, Turkey's diplomatic initiatives in the European capitals have drawn their attention. Obviously, Ankara wants to convince them to allow it to take the action needed to guarantee its border security.

Nevertheless, Ankara will not be able to resolve its problems by deploying troops in northern Iraq and by trying to resolve the problems in the region through force. On the contrary, that approach will increase Turkey's problems. Many political observers are convinced that Ankara officials should hold direct talks with the Kurds and agree to recognize certain rights for them. That, they say, will contribute toward the effort Turkey is making to resolve its problems and safeguard its territorial integrity.

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Commentary Examines President's Bangladesh Visit

NC1210095995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 12 Oct 95

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's visit to Bangladesh, and the rare welcome extended by the Muslim people there to the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran has started a new phase in relations between these two Muslim countries. Our president, who arrived in Dhaka on 10 October amidst a warm and spectacular welcome by the Bangladesh Government and people, has met with the president and prime minister of that country. During these meetings, the two countries agreed to consolidate bilateral political and economic relations, and agreed on Iran's assistance to Bangladesh for the exploration of its gas and oil resources.

At a dinner reception given in his honor by the Bangladesh president, Hashemi-Rafsanjani stressed the need for unity and cooperation among the Islamic countries in solving their problems, and expressed satisfaction over the increasing political and economic cooperation between Tehran and Dhaka.

The Bangladesh people's strong inclination toward Islam and Islamic Iran, which was widely reflected in the Bangladesh and other world media during our president's visit to Dhaka, shows that the Bangladesh Muslims have preserved their genuine Islamic identity even though they lived under the colonialist rule of international plunderers for many years. Undoubtedly this is a determining factor in the further expansion of these two great Islamic countries' relations. This is especially true because Iran and Bangladesh have relatively similar views on international problems and, as a result, they can closely cooperate in international organizations through bilateral political cooperation.

In addition to political issues, Tehran and Dhaka have taken effective steps during the past few years to expand bilateral economic relations. The two countries' efforts to expand these relations are of great significance because Iran's potentials have prompted Bangladesh make a special effort to trade with our country. These two countries can cooperate in the various fields that they are interested in and to meet each other's needs in great contrast to the existing restrictions imposed by Western industrial countries. These tendencies, especially during the past few years, have helped the leaders in Tehran and Dhaka to think more strongly about expanding economic relations.

Vice President, Pakistani Oil Minister Meet

LD1210090395 Tehran IRNA in English 2257 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Oct. 12, IRNA — Pakistani Minister of Oil and Natural Resources Anwar Saifullah told First Vice-President Hasan Habibi here today that Iran with its rich oil, gas and other resources plays a vital and constructive role in the region and by taking basic steps towards resolving of regional conflicts has worked for peace and calm in the interests of regional people.

Saifullah Khan called Iran to continue its efforts for resolving regional issues particularly the Afghan and Kashmir problems.

He called as "positive" the outcome of his meeting with his Iranian counterpart Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i earlier on Wednesday [11 October], and said the agreements signed between Asian countries are capable of bring peace and economic growth to the whole region.

Habibi announcing pleasure over the outcome of the meeting of the two countries' oil ministers, underlined the importance of Tehran-Islamabad historic and cultural relations.

He also expressed Iran's readiness for cooperating with Pakistan and other countries in the field of energy.

Habibi expressed regret over the continuation of conflict between the Afghan groups and the interference of foreign powers into the affairs of that country, terming outside meddlings as against the interests of the Afghan people and regional countries.

Majles Official Condemns U.S. Presence in Gulf

LD1110183795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Text] During a meeting this evening between Mr. Alan Dukes, chairman of Ireland's parliamentary committee on foreign affairs, and Deputy Majles Speaker Hasan Rowhani, the two officials discussed ways of expanding relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Ireland.

In the meeting, Mr. Dukes referred to Dublin's willingness to expand its relations with Iran and expressed the hope that bilateral relations would expand further with the holding of a joint economic committee session in the near future. He described the role played by Iran in

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the sensitive Persian Gulf region as important, and said: The European Community attaches a great deal of importance to the security of the Persian Gulf region and, therefore, the exchange of views between the EU and Iran enjoys a special significance.

Mr. Rowhani welcomed the expansion of the two countries' relations and called for the provision of facilities by Ireland for the setting up of an exhibition of Iranian goods in Ireland.

The secretary of our country's Supreme National Security Council [Rowhani] described the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf region as unjustifiable. He also criticized Europe's silence about the U.S. presence in the region and announced Iran's readiness for cooperation with Europe to rid the region of mass destruction weapons.

He added: The Zionist regime's refusal to sign the mass destruction weapon's non-proliferation treaty and the U.S. illogical support for it [Israel] are the main obstacles in the way of establishing peace and security in the Middle East.

Article Comments on Foreign Exchange, Exports

95LA0380B Tehran RESALAT in Persian 13 Jul 95 pp 1, 11

[Article by 'Abbas Darvish-Tavangar: "Fifty-Seven-Day Results"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Late in the month of Ordibehesht [21 April-21 May] the government made new decisions in the areas of foreign exchange and exports and announced that these include requiring exporters to submit a commitment to return 100 percent of the foreign exchange gained from exports, requiring exporters to sell export foreign exchange in the banking network, announcing the price of 3,000 rials [R] per dollar for export foreign exchange until the end of the year 1374 [20 March 1996], setting a six-month limit on the time allowed to report and sell foreign exchange gained from carpet exports, setting a limit of three months for other goods, and cutting the parity relationship between imports and exports.

Although with 57 days now passed since the announcement it is too early to do a careful and expert evaluation of these new policies, at least with regard to their short-term effects, significant and emphatic points can be made, some of which will be mentioned below:

1. Control of the growth of the inflation rate: The government's most important success in adopting the new foreign exchange policy was bringing the inflation rate under control, which was increasing at a runaway rate before that. This was mostly the result of stabilizing the foreign exchange rate, and this brought stability to the prices of other goods and services and also aroused a wave of hope among the common people. If the statistics on the price indicators for consumer goods and services, which unfortunately will not be available to the media for several more months, were published in a timely fashion, it would be clear that inflation has been growing more slowly than it did in the previous months. Of course the continuation of this depends on certain conditions, some of which will be mentioned.

If the Economic Council were to revise its policies on "market fringe activity," there would certainly be hope of greater control of the rate of growth in inflation. Instead of taking a passive approach in following free market prices, the Economic Council should take the initiative in order to be able to influence the free market. The Springtime of Freedom Coin and vehicles are among the goods that confirm the success of this approach.

2. Control of severe fluctuations in the price of foreign exchange: With the announcement of the price of export foreign exchange (at R3,000 per dollar) and illegal sales of foreign exchange at higher prices, and also the impossibility for foreign goods to enter the market independently of the banking system, the sharp fluctuations in foreign exchange rates have been removed. Likewise, illegal sales have also appeared even with the reductions in the foreign exchange rate, and it is likely that if this policy continues to be pursued seriously, it will increase even more than this.

Because for better or worse the price of free-market foreign exchange has become an indicator for instantaneously pricing goods and services, this has both weakened Iran's national currency and created an atmosphere of no confidence among the public with respect to inflationary expectations.

It must not be forgotten that until recently in most stores they had charts posted and every percentage increase in the foreign exchange was reflected in the price of goods. This practice has now been stopped, and since the foreign exchange rate has been stabilized, it can no longer be an excuse to increase the prices of goods and services.

3. Problems appearing with opening foreign exchange accounts: Unfortunately, the Central Bank has not yet issued the necessary precise guidelines to the banking networks concerning the opening of foreign exchange credit accounts based on the new policies, and the foreign exchange branches of the banks are apparently negligent in this except with respect to basic goods. Of course accounts have been opened in some cases, but this has not been the general practice. For this reason,

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in the Central Bank the registration of orders for some goods is being done on the basis of personal taste. It is being said that of two chain stores, each of which is in similar circumstances, foreign exchange has been allocated to one and the other has not yet obtained it. After dividing the goods that are eligible for the R1,750 and R3,000 foreign exchange rates, the Central Bank is still acting on the basis of personal taste.

Some importers of goods eligible for the R1,760 foreign exchange rate have been told that they can only import these goods if they pay the R3,000 rate, while other similar importers have been given the lower foreign exchange rate

The Central Bank has announced that the transfer of foreign exchange into the country from abroad is permitted, and people who have transferred this foreign exchange may transfer foreign exchange abroad from these same funds, but in numerous cases permission has not been given to transfer foreign exchange abroad for imports. This has created an atmosphere of no confidence and it could undermine the new policies.

Coordination has not yet been created between the Central Bank and the ministries. The ministry in charge allocates the foreign exchange needed for its units, but in the Central Bank this allocated foreign exchange is not issued, or an account is opened only for a small part of it.

In any case, it is necessary that the Central Bank open credit accounts where needed by the producing and export units, especially for basic goods. It must do this in a timely fashion and to the extent needed (in accordance with the nation's foreign exchange ability) so that import needs, which make up part of supply, will not be faced with difficulties. Otherwise, the inflation rate will increase again with reduced supply, and production will also decline and stop.

4. Decline in non-oil exports: In the encounter with the new policies, so far exports have suffered the most damage. Of course some exporters have sacrificed and have reduced their short-term profits in order to export. God willing, the government will encourage them when needed.

With the re-establishment of the foreign exchange contract (of course with basic changes in the rial value of the contracts) and especially the high prices placed on export goods at the Export Development Center, which apparently has not yet changed, the exports of some goods have produced losses. In the past these losses were made up by imports in exchange for exports. This possibility has now been removed and the motivation to export has also been reduced. It is said that some exporters who have turned their goods in to Customs have taken them back.

If the government does not keep its promise to give priority to exporters in the procurement of import needs, especially imports of raw materials for exports, this problem will become more acute. Likewise, as long as the price set for an item is several times its true value on the world market and the exporter is also committed to returning that same amount of foreign exchange to the country, exports will bring the exporter nothing but losses.

One of the dangers the stagnation of non-oil exports has created is smuggled exports. Carpets, as Iran's major export after oil, are already in this situation. If definite decisions are not made in this regard, many of Iran's export markets, which were created through great effort, will be lost to competitors.

In view of the fact that the Central Bank has taken over meeting requests for foreign exchange under the new policies and is also faced on the other hand with the repayment of foreign debts and commitments, and likewise in view of the fact that priority has been given to the procurement of basic, essential, and capital goods, clearly the government will not be able to meet these requests solely by relying on oil revenues. It is in this respect that the reinforcement of non-oil exports is justified. Therefore, if non-oil exports come to a standstill, Iran's economy will be deprived of the foreign exchange derived from exports, and this deprivation will lead to an inability to answer to $4.4 billion in foreign exchange demand.

5. Smuggling: With regard to fighting smuggling, although there has been more activity in the Ministry of the Interior, the low value of confiscated goods compared to the abundance of smuggled goods inside the country is testimony to the fact that there is need for a more serious campaign. There is reason to be thankful and to praise the respected commander of the police force, who announced on 4/18/1374 [9 July 1995] the confiscation of R45.6 billion in goods in the first three months of the current year [21 March-21 June 1995], the arrest of 13,341 people, and the destruction of 27 gangs; this shows a 150 percent growth in smuggling confiscation. If we compare the figure of R45.6 billion with annual imports of $2 to $3 billion in smuggled goods, which based on the export foreign exchange rate is R6,000 billion R9,000 billion, it is clear that the figure for confiscation is insignificant compared to the one for all smuggled goods.

What the hezbollah nation wants and expects from the government penalties organizations and especially the nation's judiciary is to deal more decisively with

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violators. If the constant and comprehensive reports on all the confrontations with saboteurs and smugglers are made available to public opinion, this will both be a lesson for violators who have not yet fallen into the nets of justice and will also make the people more enthusiastic.

If it is true that smugglers have blank customs forms which are sealed and signed and that they register the smuggled goods on them as soon as they encounter police or intelligence agents, thereby escaping the net of justice, the anti-smuggling campaign cannot be considered effective. In this regard the Ministry of Economic and Financial Affairs and Customs must design precise guidelines and specific mechanisms and issue them to customs offices throughout the country, and they must also deal harshly with violators.

Article Says Imports Threaten Domestic Production

95LA0380C Tehran RESALAT in Persian 6 Aug 95 p 11

[Article by 'Ali Chaveshi: "Imports Vital Threat to Production"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A year ago I decided with several friends to repay our debt to the country and to put into production all of our capital, which we had formerly used for commerce.

We thought we would produce something that was both needed in Iranian society and had not been produced previously in Iran. We put several motorcycle spare parts on the production line, including rear pump auxiliaries, various types of motorcycles, front headlight shields, side baffles, chain cases, axles, and several other items.

After a year or two of running, early in 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] our product came off the production line. Now after running for a time, the motorcycle rear pump auxiliary is ready to market. We have come up against a serious problem, and that is the importation of Taiwanese motorcycle rear auxiliaries.

While complaining about the quality of domestic products, the customers say the Taiwanese variety has flooded the market!

Yet all of our effort on our products has been directed toward quality, and we believe in our products so much that we market them with a one-year guarantee.

The quality of our goods is much higher than that of the Taiwanese variety and is even competitive with the Japanese variety. Unfortunately, however, the Taiwanese imports on that market have created serious problems for our sales.

Of course, with regard to the other parts we produce, since there are no foreign equivalents we have no problem. Currently, this problem has to do with various types of motorcycle rear auxiliaries.

If import market officials do not take serious steps to stop imports of this item, we will be faced with the danger of bankruptcy and serious damage and loss.

Zarrinshahr—sales manager for the Kemal Electric Company, Seyyed 'Ali Chaveshi

Daily Views Foreign Exchange, Car Industry

95LA0380F Tehran RESALAT in Persian 6 Aug 95 p 11

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Affairs Division — Road tests on several examples of two new domestically made passenger automobile and van models will soon be completed.

Engineer Seyyed Mohammad 'Ali Seyyed-Abrishami, deputy minister of industries for metal industries, announced this in an interview with RESALAT's economic affairs correspondent.

Production of National Vehicle

Engineer Seyyed Abrishami then noted that "We have no special definition of the national vehicle." He said: If what is meant by producing a national vehicle is the construction of a vehicle with 100 percent of the parts made inside the country, it must be said that now no vehicle manufacturing company in any country does this because it is not economical to build some parts that have special standards inside the country.

Production and This Year's Vehicle Selling Prices

Eng. Seyyed-Abrishami noted that "estimated domestic market demand for vehicles this year is about 90,000 units." He added: The vehicle production schedule for producing units this year is based on market need. During the first four months of this year [21 March - 22 July] Iran Vehicle, which is the main producer of passenger automobiles, produced 19,000 Peykans; this is more than half the number produced last year.

Our correspondent asked him, "in view of the reduction in the foreign exchange rate and the stabilization of the price of the dollar at 3,000 rials [R], will the selling price of domestically produced vehicles decrease in the future?" He answered: The selling price of domestically produced vehicles is set by the Vehicle Committee in the Consumer and Producer Protection Organization, which has representatives from the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Industries, the Support Organization, and the Producing Company. The Ministry of Industries always

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supports decreases in the prices of metal industries products, including vehicles.

The deputy minister of industries for non-metallic industries said "the finished cost of a Peykan passenger vehicle is about R20 million," and added: Already the difference in the selling price of each unit, which is R9.5 million, is deposited once every six months into the account of the Consumer and Producer Protection Organization, and the general policy is to keep the selling prices of vehicles at a minimum to the extent that the market allows.

Effect of New Prices on Metal Industries Production

He noted that "foreign exchange policies are not separate from the country's economic policies." He added: What is being produced right now in the metal industries and vehicle factories is being done with the use of raw materials and parts left over from last year, and this was procured with foreign exchange earned from exports.

Eng. Seyyed-Abrishami was asked by our correspondent: "In view of the fact that the metal industries are the biggest consumers of foreign exchange, won't foreign exchange limitations cause a drop in production in this sector?" He answered: What is important for the producing units is stable foreign exchange policies, not limitations, because if a producing unit knows how it can have imports and exports, it can organize its production program on this basis.

Foreign Exchange Needed by Metal Industries

Eng. Seyyed-Abrishami was asked "how much foreign exchange will be needed in the metal industries sector, as estimated by the Ministry of Industries? How much has been allocated for the current year by the Central Bank?" He said: The needed foreign exchange for this sector, in view of the limitations for the current year, has been announced to the Central Bank as R1.7 billion, of which by the end of the current year the Central Bank has provided R800 million on account for production in this sector.

He said the amount of requests received for foreign exchange by producing units in the metal industries sector up to early in the month of Tir [22 June—22 July] this year is more than $1 billion. He said: Of this amount, by the end of the month of Tir this year $180 million in foreign exchange has been opened in foreign exchange credit accounts by the Central Bank for the producing units in this sector.

The deputy minister of industries for metal industries said the reason for the high level of requests for foreign exchange by the producing units is psychological and said: Due to the fact that in the first three months of the current year [21 March-22 June] foreign exchange credit accounts were not opened for the units, the units declared their entire foreign exchange needs at one time. This amount will decrease by the end of this year [20 March 1996].

Metal Industries Production This Spring

With regard to the amount of production in the metal industries sector, he added: In the first three months of this year 357 buses were produced in the nation's industrial and producing units, along with 197 minibuses, 431 trucks, 16,980 passenger vehicles, 2,183 pickup trucks, 1,010 four-wheel-drive pickup trucks, 18,681 motorcycles, 27,557 bicycles, 71,000 gas water heaters, 75,000 gas heaters, 6,000 oil heaters, 75,000 gas stoves, 52,000 11-kg cylinders, 102,400 water coolers, 56,000 table fans, 15,100 electric sweepers, 1,941,000 electric plugs and outlets, 7,600 washing machines, 90,000 household refrigerators and refrigerator-freezers, 20,300 fruit juicers, 98,000 2-kg cylinders, 65,000 square meters of steel radiators, 127,000 automobile radiators, 380 tractors, and 65,000 electric motors.

Daily Provides Gold Coin Prices in Tehran Market

95LA0380D Tehran RESALAT in Persian 6 Aug 95 p 11

[FBIS Translated Text] The price of an official gold Springtime of Freedom Coin on free market transactions in Tehran was stable on Saturday [5 August] compared to the price on Thursday last week.

Our correspondent reports that yesterday in Tehran the price of an official gold Springtime of Freedom Coin on free market transactions was 395,000 rials, and a gold coin with the old design was being bought and sold at R330,000.

Daily Reports on Coupon Correcting Centers

95LA0380E Tehran RESALAT in Persian 6 Aug 95 p 11

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Affairs Division—Based on repeated requests from dear citizens, in addition to the 26 staffs located in Tehran's 20 districts, five more precincts have been added to expedite the process of removing defects in files for the receipt of coupons in stage 10.

The Public Relations Office of the Ministry of Commerce reports that these staffs are as follows:

1. Martyr Mostafa Khomeyni Street, opposite Seyyed Esma'il Square, Haman Rowshan Alley, mosque side;

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2. Piruzi Street, 5th Air Force Street just before the first traffic circle, [word illegible] 4/23 Street;
3. Dr. Fatemi Street, Unknown Martyr Boulevard, Jahan Ara Street, Street 41 Block 70, which has been provided especially for citizens who report to settle their accounts and be sent to the municipality of their choice;
4. Ayatollah Kashani Street at the end of Shahr-e Ziba, Alaleh Boulevard, at 'Edalat Street and Alreza Mosque;
5. Niyavaran Square, Niyavaran Passion Play Theater

Daily Announces Rice Coupons, Sales Outlets

95LA0380G Tehran RESALAT in Persian 6 Aug 95 p 11

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Affairs Division—In a statement, the Office of Executive Affairs of the Ministry of Commerce Economic Mobilization Staff announced: Urban Coupon 75 from the Stage Nine Coupon Series has been designated for obtaining rationed rice at the equilibrium price for citizens living in the city and province of Tehran, at the rate of three kg per person priced at 1,300 rials [R] per kg, a total price of R3,900 per coupon. The coupons will be valid for consumers until 8/21/1374 [12 November 1995] and they will be valid for sellers to submit to the branches of the Export Bank until 5/24/1374 [15 August 1995].

In this same regard, all citizens of Tehran are asked to gradually present their coupons and obtain their rice at the local consumer cooperative sales outlets, the branches of the Sepah Consumer Cooperative Stores, all government employee cooperatives, The Eteka Organization Stores, the Teachers Cooperative Union Stores, the fruit and vegetable parks at Resalat Square, the Kerman Daily Market on Jennat Street, the Ruzbahareh Market, the Be'sat Highway, Kiyan-e Shahr at the end of 17 Shahrivar Street, Afsariyeh Square at Moshiriyeh Daily Market, Pasdaran (formerly Farmanieh) at Nowasaneh Vegetable Market, Khazaneh Bokharani Street, Khazaneh Daily Market, and all the Qods stores.

Nepal

Lohani Voices Confidence in Improved China Ties

BK0510113995 Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL in English 29 Sep 95 p 1,8

[RSS report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kathmandu, Sept. 24 (RSS): Foreign Minister Dr Prakash Chandra Lohani has appreciated China's help and goodwill towards Nepal and expressed confidence that relations will improve still further in the future.

Speaking at a dinner hosted by Nepal-China Society yesterday on the occasion of the 46th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, Dr. Lohani hoped the future would see more economic collaboration between the two countries so that the rising prosperity of the two peoples becomes an embodiment of goodwill towards each other.

Pointing out that China and Nepal have always been good friends with relations going back centuries he said it is built on the foundation of a long history of cultural interaction, respect for each other's sensitivities, mutual understanding, willingness to work together for peace and friendship and the development of national economies.

We have always appreciated China's help to Nepal and its desire and willingness to help modernise our economy, he said.

Independence and interdependence are not mutually exclusive he said adding we have to find a balance to achieve a sense of harmony between these two seemingly contradictory impulses.

For this we need determination to maintain an environment of peace and goodwill between nations both big and small, and in this context China's role in the world has been positive and encouraging. Its attitude and behaviour towards small neighbouring countries has been reassuring and helpful, he said.

China's great success in building her economy has not only helped the world economy but also contributed to the maintenance of peace in the world, he also said.

Chinese Ambassador Shao Jiong Chu expressed confidence that through the joint efforts of the two governments and peoples the close relations that so happily exist between China and Nepal will continue to grow in all dimensions in the years to come.

Former prime minister Kirti Nidhi Bista and MP Radha Krishna Mainali spoke about the special characteristics of Nepal-China ties.

Also present were heads of foreign diplomatic missions, political party leaders and MPs.

Lohani on Relations With India, Bhutan

BK1210051395 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 9 Oct 95

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KATHMANDU, Oct 8 — The three party coalition government has given top priority to safeguarding and promoting Nepal's national interest in its dealing with Nepal's friends and neighbours.

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The new Foreign Minister, Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani, in an exclusive interview with The Kathmandu Post [TKP] and Kantipur today said that while doing so Nepal would remain sensitive at the same time to their point of view.

Dr. Lohani talking about the Nepal-India treaties and pacts including the 1950 Nepal-India Treaty of Peace and Friendship said, All our treaties and understandings must be viewed with this perspective (of evolving regional geo-political situation and aspirations of our peoples).

Describing Nepal as one of India's best friends in this region, Dr. Lohani said, we must proceed step by step establishing in the process an improved atmosphere of trust and confidence based on equality, understanding of each others national interest and the principle of mutual sharing of benefits.

Pointing out that both nations win from an interaction, Dr. Lohani said that one had to approach the Tanakpur issue with India and the refugee problem with Bhutan in this perspective.

Describing Tanakpur as an impediment that has been discussed in the parliament for three years, the new Foreign Minister stressed on the need to get over the problem. It, he said, is not only Nepals problem but that of both the countries.

TKP: Are you happy with the new cabinet and its composition?

Lohani: Happiness is a relative term like most things in this world. So you can say that I am satisfied with the new cabinet and its composition.

TKP: Are the parties happy with the allotment?

Lohani: Well I suppose things could have been better but at the same time there is no reason to be dissatisfied with our present position.

TKP: How do you plan to deal with the Bhutanese refugee problems?

Lohani: Bhutan and Nepal are two friendly and small nations of our region. We never had any problem in the past. However, the refugee question at present is a serious issue. As you know there has been ministerial meetings to solve this problem. There are some differences in our perception of the problem as well as the necessary mechanism and process relevant to its solution. We will need to have more dialogues in the future. [passage omitted]

TKP: What is the new government's policy on India going to be? How do you look at the Indo-Nepal Friendship Treaty of 1950. Do you plan to propose to India a review of this treaty as done by the predecessor government?

Lohani: We want to strength our good relations with India based on mutual understanding, goodwill and equality. As you know our relations with India are deep, complex and extensive. We would like to think that we are one of India's best friend in this region. This friendship must be continuously nurtured and strengthened keeping in view the evolving geo-political situation of the region and the aspirations of our peoples.

All our treaties and understandings must be viewed with this perspective. We must proceed step by step establishing in the process an improved atmosphere of trust and confidence based on quality understanding of each others national interest and the principle of mutual sharing of benefits.

TKP: What issues are of immediate priority to you?

Lohani: As a foreign minister my first priority is to safeguard and promote Nepal's national interest in dealings with our friends and neighbours, while remaining sensitive at the same time to their point of view. We must move with the idea that relationship among nations is not a zero sum game where the gain of one necessarily means a loss to the other. In a bilateral context we should try to work on the principle that both nations win from an interaction.

It is with this perspective that we have to approach the Tanakpur issue with India and the Bhutanese refugee problem with Bhutan.

I see immense possibilities for bilateral cooperation and understanding with India on the question of utilizing the water resources of Nepal for the benefit of both countries. What we need is a vision for the 21st century and an willingness to build an atmosphere of trust and confidence based on fair and equitable sharing of benefits. In this, the Tanakpur issue remains an impediment that has been discussed in the parliament in Nepal for almost three years. We need to get over this problem.

It is not just Nepal's problem but the problem of both our countries in view of the necessity of creating an atmosphere conductive for the exploitation of water resources in Nepal for the progress and prosperity of both our peoples.

TKP: How long do you think the coalition government would last?

Lohani: Under the reasonable assumptions I think it will last for the next four years.

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Government Papers Freed To Compete; Radio, TV Controls Stay

BK1210042495 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 10 Oct 95

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KATHMANDU, Oct.9 — If what the new government says comes true, then the two state-owned daily newspapers Gorkhapatra and The Rising Nepal could soon find themselves competing page for page, reader for reader — and most important of all government sponsored adverts for adverts with the private press.

At a felicitation function held in his honour by Nepal Press Union [NPU] here on Monday, Communication and Information Minister Chiranjibi Wagle said, the government wants to be free of the hassles of running newspapers. State-owned print media should be run by competing with the private press.

Government-owned electronic media, the radio and television, will have no such luck, however. We will develop the electronic media as a national medium for creating awareness. It will be developed as a public property owned by the people, Minister Wagle said.

Throughout its existence, government-owned media in the country has been used by their ruling political masters as their personal belonging. The relationship has been cosy for the papers as well, because of the advertisements and subsidies doled out to them by the government.

Asked to comment on the proposed opening up of the FM [frequency modulated] airwaves to the private sector, Wagle replied, I haven't had the time to study the matter, but we will encourage the private sector.

The minister also took the opportunity to call on the press to practice healthy journalism, and to discard biased and unjournalistic news reporting.

Biased reporting of political affairs is a dangerous trend, but thankfully such a trend is on the wane in the country, he said.

Wagle also reiterated the governments unwavering commitment to respect and safeguard press freedom as enshrined in the constitution.

Nepal Press Union president Ramesh Toofan, Nepal Journalist Association president Harihar Birahi, NPU general secretary Bharat Bhurtel and advisor Tara Baral also spoke on the occassion, drawing the ministers attention to several vexing problems facing the press.

Daily Welcomes Government Move To Free Press

BK1210052595 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 11 Oct 95

[Editorial: "Give Up Media Control" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The news report that the government wants to free itself of the hassles of running newspapers is indeed a welcome move towards safeguarding press freedom as enshrined in the Constitution. So far throughout its existence, the government-owned media in the country has been used by their ruling political masters from the Panchayat times to present democratic days to trumpet their imagined achievements and unduly influence the people.

If the media is to be truly independent, not only must journalists live by the undeclared but ever present code of impartiality that eschews political, governmental or corporate patronage, but equally importantly, they must also have the Constitutional guarantee of the right to information. Politicians in power must not be allowed to get away with the comforting thought that they can block the media's access to information and curtail the freedom of the press by offering advertisements, subsidies and extending patronage to journalists. Such official patronage and largesse have been quite often extended to the media by the government. All this must stop. The media must assert its rights but at the same time, it must also own its responsibilities.

What we have so far had since the restoration of democracy are successive governments who have held onto the government media at the cost of the private sector media. Ironically, it is these very leaders who wax so eloquent on topics like the consolidation of democracy in Nepal. They do not seem to realise the important role the private sector media play in strengthening democracy in the country. If on the one hand, the facilities being made available to the private media have been reduced, on the other, the state-owned ones are having cosy relationship with the government because of the advertisements and subsidies doled out to them by the government. This step-motherly treatment does not arise out of benign neglect. The neglect here is deliberate. Hence the need for a change in the government attitude. For the hard-earned democracy can take its root only when the media is independent, strong and vibrant. This state of affairs certainly calls for the state-owned print media to compete with the private ones.

The government is also, in a way, responsible for this sorry state of fourth estate into which it has fallen. Not only this, there has been a lot of successive

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governments unwavering commitment to respect and safeguard press freedom. But unfortunately, nothing of this sort happened. The government media is apparently too precious to let go. For after all, such media does indeed provide the party in power a readily available means to score publicity points. Now with the new coalition governments commitment to be free from state-run newspapers, one can hope that newspapers are developed as a public property rather than the personal belongings. And for this, the government must ensure that the government print media is privatized as early as possible as the minister has promised. But one of the ironies of utterances of Nepalese ministers is that they say one thing when they actually mean just the opposite. The Nepalese people would like to believe that Information Minister Chiranjibi Wagle really means what he says, at least in this instance.

Pakistan

Communique Issued After Leghari Azerbaijan Visit

BK1110145295 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 11 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Azerbaijan has reiterated its support for the peaceful settlement of the Kashmir issue according to the United Nations Security Council resolution. This was stated in a joint communique issued on the conclusion of the Pakistan president's three-day state visit to Azerbaijan in Baku today. The Azeri president reaffirmed his country's support in all international fora for Pakistan's efforts for a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir issue. The two sides expressed the view that the continuing unresolved Kashmir dispute constituted threat to the peace and security of the region. The Pakistan president briefed his counterpart on the situation in held Kashmir and on Pakistan's efforts for a peaceful settlement of the issue in accordance with UN Security Council resolution. The communique says that President Aliyev informed his Pakistani counterpart about continued aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan. The Pakistani president reiterated Pakistan's principled support for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and nonviolation of borders of Azerbaijan. He condemned the Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan and called for a peaceful resolution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict according to the aspirations of the people of Azerbaijan and UN resolutions.

On Afghanistan, the two leaders expressed their concern over the situation there and called for amicable settlement of the conflict in accordance with the aspirations of the people of Afghanistan. They expressed their support for the international efforts aimed at achieving peace and conciliation in Afghanistan. The two presidents noted with satisfaction the rapid development of mutually beneficial and result-oriented ties on the basis of firm adherence to the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, and noninterference in the internal affairs of each other. Both leaders agreed that the two countries had established a close relationship which was motivated by the objectives of raising the socioeconomic level of the people of both countries and of strengthening regional stability. They emphasized the need for increased trade, economic cooperation, and the establishment of joint ventures for the promotion of bilateral economic relations between the two countries. The Azeri president accepted Pakistan president's invitation to pay an official visit to Pakistan.

President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari returned to Islamabad this evening after a three day visit to Azerbaijan. Earlier, he was given warm send off when he left for Baku for home. The Azeri president, prime minister, and other leaders bade farewell to the Pakistan president at the airport. A smartly turned out contingent of Azeri armed forces presented the guard of honor.

Islamabad Said Endeavoring for Regional Peace

BK1210060795 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has said Pakistan is endeavoring to establish peaceful conditions in the region. Talking to newsmen on board his plane while returning home after a three-day official visit to Azerbaijan, the president said Pakistan wants to strengthen the Economic Cooperation Organization for the socioeconomic development of the member states. He said his earlier visit to Turkmenistan and the current visit to Azerbaijan were aimed at conveying a message to the countries of the region that Pakistan wants to promote close relations with them and to ensure stability in the region, including Afghanistan. The president expressed the hope that peace will be restored to Afghanistan through cooperation with the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the United Nations. He said the Azeri leadership also supported Pakistan's stand for peace and stability in Afghanistan.

During his visit to Azerbaijan, the president said he discussed regional and international issues with his Azeri counterpart Geydar Aliyev and expressed Pakistan's support to Azerbaijan on the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh. Similarly, the Azeri leadership expressed its unequivocal support to Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. The president said both countries want to promote their relations; and during his visit, five agreements of cooperation were signed in various fields.

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Technology Cooperation Talks Held With PRC

BK0310150395 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 3 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Matters relating to enhanced cooperation between Pakistan and China in science and technology and economic fields were discussed at a meeting in Islamabad today. The Chinese delegation, led by Assistant Minister for Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Mr. Liu Xiangdong, was informed that Pakistan was interested in technology transfer from China in low-cost housing and information technology. The Chinese minister said his government desired to further develop economic, trade, and scientific cooperation with Pakistan. He said his delegation's visit was aimed at exploring new areas of collaboration in public and private sectors.

Report on State Bank's Annual Economic Report

BK0910110095 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 9 Oct 95 p 1,10

[Report by Shaikh Taj Muhammad]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi—Showing satisfaction on the improvement in the growth rate of the economy from 3.8 per cent in 1993-94 to 4.7 per cent in 1994-95, the State Bank of Pakistan's [SBP] annual report, released on Sunday [8 October], shows concern over excessive public sector borrowing which resulted in the high rate of inflation at 12.9 per cent during the year under review.

The SBP Annual Report 1994-95 expressed concern over the rate of national savings which is among the lowest in the group of developing countries. It said: "Increase in the investment level in the context of falling or stagnant rate of national savings, even if it can be sustained, increases the dependence of the economy on external resource inflows and makes the domestic economy and the balance of payments vulnerable to external developments."

Although, the gross domestic product (GDP) showed an improvement, the report said it fell short of the potential of the economy as the target of 6.9 per cent could not be met. The improvement as compared to the previous year was mainly attributable to an expansion in agricultural to an expansion in agricultural output from 2.9 per cent in 1993-94 to 4.9 per cent in 1994-95.

The improved performance of the agricultural sector reflected mainly an increase of 6.4 per cent in the output of major crops in 1994-95 as against no growth in 1993-94. Wheat production increased by 11.4 per cent to 16.9 million tonnes while cotton production was up by 8.2 per cent to 8.7 million bales but remained below the target of 9.5 million bales. Production of sugarcane, maize, gram and tobacco also went up but rice production declined by 13.7 per cent.

The production of minor agricultural crops increased by only 1.2 per cent as compared with 5.3 per cent in the previous year. The sluggish growth of minor crops not only slowed down the rate of the agricultural growth but it was also one of the major factors for the increase in the cost of living.

Regarding industrial sector, the SBP report said: "It could barely maintain its last year's growth rate and mining and quarrying in fact showed a sharp reduction in output."

The growth rate of the industrial sector at 5 per cent in 1994-95 was only marginally higher than that in 1993-94 and substantially below the trend growth rate and the target for the year. The increase in real value added items of the large scale manufacturing at 2.7 per cent in the year under review was lower than the growth of 4.1 per cent in the preceding year.

Production of cotton yarn, sugar, fertilizers, cigarettes, bicycles and tyres and tubes for motorcycles and motorcars registered low growth rates and in some cases were even negative. Delayed commencement of cane crushing, closure of several textile units due to high cotton prices and structural problems faced by the textile sector, capacity constraint in petroleum refining and increases in the price of critical inputs, like petroleum products, gas and electricity were mainly responsible for sluggish growth of the large-scale manufacturing sector. In addition, the manufacturing sector in the last few years has been passing through a period of adjustment to an environment of internal and external competition created by the opening up of the economy and the reduction and the rationalisation of tariffs. The sickness of some of the established industrial units had also hampered the economy.

Regarding new investment, the SBP report said: "There are hopeful signs that increased incentives for investment, particularly in the power, export-oriented and technology-intensive sectors, have begun to bear fruit as evidenced by a sharp rise in the imports of machinery and intermediate goods in 1994-95 and a large increase in the disbursement of bank credit to the private sector. Private fixed investment increased by 15.5 percent in 1994-95 as compared with 11.6 percent in 1993-94 and public sector investment by 18.8 percent as compared with 7.1 percent."

However, the SBP report mentioned that the increase in investment could be sustained over the long-run only by increasing the level of domestic savings. Private

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savings did increase from 13.1 percent of the GDP in the preceding year to 13.9 percent in 1994-95, but were offset by a fall in public sector savings. As a result, the national savings declined from 15.7 percent of the GDP in 1993-94 to 14.8 percent in 1994-95.

Terming the rising level of prices as "disturbing", the SBP report said all the price indices recorded higher rates of increase in 1994-95 as compared to the preceding year. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) recorded an annual average increase of 12.9 percent, followed by the GDP deflator (14.8 percent), the Sensitive Price Indicator (15.5 percent) and the Wholesale Price Index (16.3 percent). A review of the Indices showed that the bulk of increase in prices during 1994-95 reflected the sharp rise in the prices of food items. In fact, food items contributed about 60 percent of the overall increase in the wholesale price index and two-thirds of the overall increase in the Consumer Price Index.

Regarding the monetary developments, the SBP report expressed concern over expansion in money supply which had increased by 16.6 percent in 1994-95 against the target of 11.8 percent. In the previous year, the growth in money supply was 16.9 percent.

Deliberating on the annual budget, the SBP report said that the budget for 1994-95 had aimed to reduce the overall deficit from 5.9 percent of the GDP to 4 percent and restrict government borrowing for budgetary support to Rs [rupees] 15 billion.

However, mainly due to the shortfall in revenue, the budget deficit declined to only 5.5 percent. Revenues of Rs 359.3 billion were expected during the year, but there was a shortfall of Rs 39.4 billion to Rs 319.9 billion.

One of the consequences of the large budget deficits for an extended period of time has been substantial accumulation of domestic and foreign debt leading to a sharp increase in the debt servicing liabilities.

There was a total national debt of Rs 1,554.6 billion at the end of June '95. Of this, Rs 796.8 billion represents domestic debt (42.7 percent of GDP). Total debt servicing liabilities in 1994-95 amounted to Rs 101.9 billion which were 23.8 percent of the total expenditure and 31.8 percent of the total revenue.

The SBP report showed satisfaction over the improvement in the balance of payments in several respects including exports increased by 17.9 percent as against a negative growth in 1993-94. The target for 1994-95 was 16.7 percent. The sale of government bonds of $150 million was also successfully launched during the year.

However, because of the import base, which is larger than the exports and remittances, both the trade and current accounts showed larger deficits of $2.3 billion and $2.1 billion respectively.

Giving targets for 1995-96, the SBP report set a goal of 6.5 percent increase in economic growth and reduction in inflation rate to 9.5 percent. It is also expected that exports will grow by 14 percent and import growth will be contained to 10.6 percent.

Minister Says Economy Grew 4.7% in '94-'95

BK1010071895 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 10 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The federal minister for commerce, Chaudhary Ahmad Mukhtar, has said as a result of the government's imaginative policies and bold steps the country's economy grew at the rate of 4.7 percent during 1994-95 as against the negative growth rate registered during the previous government. The federal minister was commenting on a statement by the PML-N [Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz] chief, Mr. Nawaz Sharif.

The minister said the government has undertaken several structural steps to control inflation. However, these measures will not produce results overnight particularly when the previous government borrowed in three years more than what all the governments had borrowed since 1947. The commerce minister said what Mr. Nawaz Sharif had said was tantamount to misleading the people about the economic conditions of the country for political reasons only.

Spokesman Refutes Reports on State of Economy

BK1010082895 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0500 GMT 10 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There has been a consistent rise in the GDP and economic growth of the country during the last two years. This was stated by an official spokesman while commenting on the recent press reports on the state of the economy. The spokesman disagreed with the assessment of press reports which said the country's economy was on the decline. He said the impression was created because in 1994-95, the GDP target was set at 6.9 percent. This target was not achieved owing to many reasons. Cotton production target was not met for the last three consecutive years due to various factors. Minor agricultural crops were also damaged by rains and floods. The spokesman said that despite problems in the textile sector, the country achieved 5 percent industrial growth in 1994-95 as against 4.5 percent in 1993-94.

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General Strike Said To Paralyze Karachi Areas

BK1210052395 Hong Kong AFP in English 0503 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KARACHI, Oct 1 (AFP) — Large areas of this commercial capital remained paralysed early Thursday [12 October] during a strike called by the powerful Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), to protest against what it calls the "ethnic cleansing" of its people.

One person was killed early Thursday in the traditionally volatile district of Orangi, in west Karachi, police said, while sporadic shooting was reported just before dawn in various parts of the city.

At least six vehicles were set ablaze late Wednesday in the run- up to the strike.

Major markets and commercial centres did not open for business while the country's premier bourse, the Karachi Stock Exchange, and the cotton market were also not expected to open.

The heavily populated central and western districts were largely paralysed, but there was some movement of traffic in the elite southern district.

Heavy patrolling by paramilitary rangers and police could be seen in several parts of Karachi.

The MQM, which represents Urdu-speaking migrants from India and is the main political force in Karachi, has called more than 20 strikes this year in protest against government policies. Thursday's strike was called to protest the deaths of seven MQM militants Tuesday, three of whom were in police custody when they were killed. The MQM says its militants are being killed "extrajudicially".

"The government wants a solution by force, not negotiations," MQM's chief negotiator Ajmal Dehlvi told AFP. "It's genocide and ethnic cleansing of Muhajirs".

Talks between the MQM and the government of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto have been suspended since late September, after the MQM accused authorities of having deliberately killed three party militants.

Just over 1,500 people have been killed in Karachi's endemic political violence this year.

Radio Reports on 'Partial Strike'

BK1210084295 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 12 Oct 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Karachi, a partial strike is being observed today on the call of Altaf Group. Many big shopping centers and markets are closed but small shops, vegetable and fruit markets are open. Sabzi Mandi [vegetable market] in the city is also open. Public transport, including coaches, buses, mini buses, rickshas and taxis, are plying on roads but limited. KTC [Karachi Transport Corporation] buses are also plying. Private vehicles, including cars and motorcycles, are visible on all roads. Air and railway services are functioning as normal. The Karachi Port is working in a routine way and the loading and unloading operation at the port is normal. A number of factories in SITE [Sindh Industrial and Trading Estate] area are also working normally. According to police sources, two vehicles were torched in Azizabad and one in New Karachi this morning. One dead body was recovered from Orangi Extension this morning.

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